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THESIS

THE CONSTRAINING DYNAMICS OF PUBLIC OPINION

by

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December 2006

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THE CONSTRAINING DYNAMICS OF PUBLIC OPINION

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ABSTRACT

Since the beginning of the Cold War, the influence of public opinion on presidential decision-making has been debated. Because the United States is a democracy, one would expect that public opinion and the ideas and concerns of the people should weigh on the decisions of the policy makers. In theory, at least, presidential decision-makers should not solely determine policy. Yet most presidential administrations would have the public believe that they are leading, not following, public opinion based on their inherent charge as elected officials to advocate what they perceive to be in the best interest of the country. It is important to understand the relationship between public opinion and executive decision-makers.

Comparing U.S. policies implemented in response to terrorist attacks against U.S. sovereignty and Iraq's persistent pursuit of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) by presidents from two different political parties offers an opportunity to analyze how public opinion is viewed by presidents, what actions the administrations took to influence public opinion, and whether public opinion ultimately affected the foreign policy decision-making of the executive. How and when public opinion constrains policymakers and their options is essential to understanding why certain policy decisions for the use of force are made and what decisions can be predicted in the future.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	INTRODUCTION.....	1
A.	PURPOSE AND IMPORTANCE	1
B.	PUBLIC OPINION AND FOREIGN POLICY NEXUS – WHAT THE EXPERTS THINK AND WHAT’S MISSING	3
1.	What’s Missing? Drill Down Into Public Opinion.....	10
C.	METHODOLOGY	14
D.	HYPOTHESIS.....	15
II.	PRESIDENT CLINTON’S RESPONSE TO THE AFRICAN EMBASSY BOMBINGS.....	17
A.	INCIDENT EXPLANATION	17
1.	Intervening Period between Bombing and U.S. Response (8 – 19 August 1998).....	19
2.	U.S. Response	23
B.	PUBLIC OPINION TOWARDS EMBASSY BOMBINGS.....	25
1.	Decision Context.....	26
2.	Beliefs	31
3.	Summation of Public Opinion	35
C.	CLINTON ADMINISTRATION’S VIEW OF PUBLIC OPINION REGARDING EMBASSY BOMBINGS	37
1.	Decision Context.....	38
2.	Beliefs	42
3.	Summation of President’s View of Public Opinion	46
D.	CLINTON ADMINISTRATION RESPONSE TO PUBLIC OPINION..	48
1.	What Did the Administration Do to Affect or Change Public Opinion, if Needed?	50
E.	POLICY RESPONSE TOWARDS EMBASSY BOMBINGS.....	52
1.	Was the Policy Response Effective?	54
III.	PRESIDENT BUSH’S RESPONSE TO THE 11 SEPTEMBER 2001 TERRORIST ATTACKS.....	57
A.	INCIDENT EXPLANATION	57
1.	Intervening Period between Attacks and U.S. Response (11 September – 7 October 2001)	60
2.	U.S. Response	63
B.	PUBLIC OPINION TOWARDS TERRORIST ATTACKS	64
1.	Decision Context.....	65
2.	Beliefs	71
3.	Summation of Public Opinion	73
C.	BUSH ADMINISTRATION’S VIEW OF PUBLIC OPINION REGARDING TERRORIST ATTACKS.....	74
1.	Decision Context.....	75
2.	Beliefs	81

3.	Summation of President's View of Public Opinion	82
D.	BUSH ADMINISTRATION RESPONSE TO PUBLIC OPINION.....	84
1.	What Did the Administration Do to Affect or Change Public Opinion, if Needed?	85
E.	POLICY RESPONSE TOWARDS TERRORIST ATTACKS	86
1.	Was the Policy Response Effective?	87
IV.	A STEP BACK: IRAQ AS A CORROBORATING CASE	89
A.	PRESIDENT CLINTON AND IRAQ.....	90
1.	Little Direct Constraint from the Public	92
2.	President Clinton's Belief Structure = Delegate	95
3.	Self-constraining Perception by the Executive.....	98
4.	Summary of Findings	99
B.	PRESIDENT BUSH AND IRAQ.....	100
1.	Little Direct Constraint from the Public	102
2.	President Bush's Belief Structure = Pragmatist	105
3.	Self-constraining Perception by the Executive.....	108
4.	Summary of Findings	109
V.	CONCLUSION	113
A.	SUMMARY OF FINDINGS	113
1.	Decision Context of the Executive (D _E)	113
2.	Beliefs of the Executive (B _E).....	117
3.	Decision Context of the Public (D _P).....	120
4.	Beliefs of the Public (B _P).....	120
5.	Overall Foreign Policy Constraint (F _C) Impactors.....	120
B.	POLICY IMPLICATIONS OF PUBLIC OPINION.....	121
C.	FINAL THOUGHTS ON PUBLIC OPINION.....	122
	APPENDIX – PRESIDENT CLINTON'S COMMENTS.....	125
	LIST OF REFERENCES.....	131
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	135
	INITIAL DISTRIBUTION LIST	147

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.	Foreign Policy Constraint According to Experts	10
Figure 2.	Staircase of Public Support and Constraint	11
Figure 3.	Foreign Policy Constraint with Added Public Breakout.....	13
Figure 4.	Clinton's Response Pictorial	53

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LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.	Beliefs Orientation Model.....	3
Table 2.	Belief Definitions.....	4
Table 3.	Foyle's IR Model	4
Table 4.	Public versus Leader List of Concerns	28
Table 5.	Periodical Comparison (Embassy Bombings and Clinton Relationship)	31
Table 6.	Periodical Comparison (Embassy Bombings and U.S.S. Cole).....	32
Table 7.	Events that Influenced Public Opinion	34
Table 8.	Clinton's Media Question and Answer Sessions by Month	40
Table 9.	Comparison of Crisis Periods	41
Table 10.	Clinton's Public Opinion Belief Structure.....	45
Table 11.	Preliminary Representation of Bush's Public Opinion Belief Structure	60
Table 12.	Question - Do you approve or disapprove of the way XX is handling his job as president? (% Approve).....	66
Table 13.	Public Approval Rating Reversals	66
Table 14.	Public Opinion Questions Prefacing War in Afghanistan	70
Table 15.	Bush Public Opinion Belief Structure.....	82
Table 16.	Bush Speaking Topics (September 2002 through February 2003).....	106
Table 17.	Dissection of September 2002 Speeches by Bush	107
Table 18.	Bush and Clinton Public Opinion Belief Structure.....	117

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. PURPOSE AND IMPORTANCE

Since the beginning of the Cold War, the influence of public opinion on presidential decision-making has been debated. Seymour Lipset argued that, “The president makes opinion, he does not follow it.”¹ Bernard Cohen’s famous quotation from a State Department official bluntly stated the reasoning for a lack of responsiveness: “To hell with public opinion ... We should lead, and not follow.”² Philip Powlick disagreed: “The prevailing norm among foreign policy officials since Vietnam has emphasized public support for policy (or at least a lack of opposition) as a sine qua non for good policy.”³ This research will assess the interaction between public opinion and presidential decision-making in the foreign policy arena. This thesis will assess how the Clinton and George W. Bush administrations viewed public opinion, what they did or did not do to influence public opinion, and how this view affected their foreign policy actions toward two critical foreign policy issues: Iraq’s defiance of the international community on its weapons of mass destruction (WMD) program and the U.S. response to Osama bin Laden’s terrorists and their training camps following the Kenya and Tanzania embassy bombings and 9/11. It will then assess the implications for future policy decisions on use of force.

Because the United States is a democracy, one would expect that public opinion and the ideas and concerns of the people should weigh on the decisions of the policy makers. In theory, at least, executive branch decision-makers should not solely determine policy. Yet most presidential administrations would have the public believe that they are leading, not following, public opinion based on their inherent charge as elected officials to advocate what they perceive to be in the best interest of the country. As Edmund Burke wrote, “[A representative’s] unbiased opinion, his mature judgment,

¹ Seymour Martin Lipset, “The President, the Polls, and Vietnam,” *Transaction*, 1966, 20.

² Bernard C. Cohen, *The Public’s Impact on Foreign Policy* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1973) 62.

³ Philip J. Powlick, “The Attitudinal Basis for Responsiveness to Public Opinion among American Foreign Policy Officials,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 35: 611-641.

his enlightened conscience, he ought not to sacrifice to you, to any man, or to any set of men living ... Your representative owes you, not his industry only, but his judgment; and he betrays, instead of serving you, if he sacrifices it to your opinion.”⁴ The problem with this assertion lies in the very nature of other forms of government. If public opinion has no effect and executives make decisions however they please, the government ceases to be a democracy and devolves into a dictatorship. As a result, “does public opinion have any weight in the decisions of the executive when it comes to foreign policy?” becomes a very salient question. Although presidential statements may minimize the effects of public opinion on foreign policy and use of force, a review of presidential and public beliefs and decisional context can provide additional insight into the potentially constraining effect of public opinion.

It is important to understand the relationship between public opinion and executive decision-makers. How public opinion constrains policymakers and their options is essential to understanding why certain policy decisions for the use of force are made and what decisions can be predicted in the future. As Louis Klarevas correctly observed: “The indication from policy makers is that American military operations require public support. As a result, scholars and analysts have come to realize that public opinion is the ‘essential domino’ of military operations.”⁵

Comparing policies implemented in response to Iraq’s WMD issue and terrorist attacks against U.S. sovereignty by presidents from two different political parties offers an opportunity to analyze how public opinion is viewed by presidents, what actions the administrations took to influence public opinion, and whether public opinion ultimately affected the foreign policy decision-making of the executive. A study of these two cases will help us to gauge how public opinion affects executive decision-making on U.S. foreign policy and provide implications for what we might expect in future debates over the possible use of force.

⁴ Ross J.S. Hofman and Paul Levack, eds., *Burke’s Politics* (New York: Knopf, 1949), 115.

⁵ Louis Klarevas, “The ‘Essential Domino’ of Military Operations: American Public Opinion and the Use of Force,” *International Studies Perspectives* (Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), 417.

B. PUBLIC OPINION AND FOREIGN POLICY NEXUS – WHAT THE EXPERTS THINK AND WHAT’S MISSING

This research will add to current understanding of how public opinion and presidential decision-making interact to affect foreign policy, namely the use of force. Four influential studies were consulted and used to provide the basis of knowledge regarding public opinion for this thesis.

The first book, entitled *Counting the Public In* by Douglas Foyle, is a case study analysis of presidential decisions from Truman through the early Clinton administration (1995). Foyle’s primary argument is that “an individual’s beliefs about *public opinion* and the *decision context* in which a choice must be made interact to determine the influence of public opinion.”⁶ Through his initial review of presidential opinions, Foyle introduces three models to identify each decision-maker’s public opinion preference. First is the Beliefs Orientation Model.

		Is public support of a foreign policy necessary?	
		YES	NO
Is it desirable for input from public opinion to affect foreign policy choices?	YES	Delegate	Executor
	NO	Pragmatist	Guardian

Table 1. Beliefs Orientation Model⁷

In this model decision-makers are identified as a “Delegate,” “Executor,” “Pragmatist,” or “Guardian”⁸ based on empirical data (autobiographical data, statements from close associates, observations verified by multiple sources) that illustrate personal beliefs regarding importance of public opinion. These categories are defined further in Table 2.

⁶ Douglas Foyle, *Counting the Public In* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), x. (emphasis added)

⁷ Foyle, 11.

⁸ Foyle, 11.

Delegate	It is desirable for public opinion to influence policy choices and necessary to have public support for a successful foreign policy.
Executor	Public opinion should be one of the initial factors considered in foreign policy formulation, and it might limit the options under consideration or suggest possible alternatives. Public opinion is not needed for support of a policy.
Pragmatist	Public input affecting foreign policy choices is not desirable, public support of the chosen policy is necessary.
Guardian	Public input into foreign policy choices is undesirable and the public's support is not necessary for a successful foreign policy.

Table 2. Belief Definitions⁹

Every policymaker has a core set of beliefs that they bring to the job. These beliefs provide a foundation from which decisions are made and agendas are set. By first identifying the foundational beliefs of decision-makers in regards to the importance of public opinion, we are able to gain an important insight into the mind of the decision-maker which helps foreshadow potential decisions they may make in the realm of foreign policy. Foyle's model provides a clear and succinct categorization of decision-makers. For practical purposes, this model will be used to help identify the beliefs of the two policy-makers (Presidents Clinton and Bush) in the two cases in this thesis.

Similar but less descriptive, useful, and arguably redundant to the first is Foyle's second model. This model categorizes the actions vice beliefs of each decision-maker in international relations (IR) terms. The actions are defined as realist or Wilsonian liberal. The definition of each is contained in Table 3.

Realist	Policy-makers should not consider public opinion as they formulate foreign policy, but can build support if needed for the chosen policy.
Wilsonian liberal	Public opinion should affect foreign policy formulation because of democratic norms and the public's moderating influence on elites.

Table 3. Foyle's IR Model¹⁰

⁹ Foyle, 11-14. Definitions are paraphrased and tabled for ease of reference

¹⁰ Foyle, 4-7.

Although Foyle provides an analysis of the actions conducted by each decision-maker in the context of realist or Wilsonian liberal, he does so half-heartedly. His final conclusion is that merely reviewing the actions and defining them in IR terms is insufficient and provides no predictive or causal influence on decisions by the policy-maker, because the executive's decisions may not follow IR theory. In most cases, the decision-maker followed their beliefs in the decision context of the issue.

Foyle's third model helps to define the "decision context" variable in his primary argument. For every situation that confronts a decision-maker, there is a context in which the situation evolves. Foyle makes a clear identification of the threat scenario which has prompted the foreign policy decision: executive decision-makers are faced with multiple threats and decisions, which range in importance and severity. Depending on the importance and severity of the context, the decisions of the executive will vary. As a result, his analysis is centered on high threat situations where time constraints are separated into "crisis (short decision time and surprise), reflexive (short decision time and anticipation), innovative (extended decision time and surprise), and deliberative (extended decision time and anticipation)."¹¹ Ultimately, when taking threat situations into consideration, decision-makers should discount and not consider public opinion in crisis, short-time-framed actions, but may view public opinion more closely when time permits in the deliberative threat situation. The analyst should be able to determine the importance of public opinion on the decision-maker. His conclusion and findings for model three are again mixed but he does recognize the importance of decision context in the mind of the executive while creating policy.

In the end, Foyle concludes that each relationship between executive and public is conditional and varies depending on circumstances surrounding and influencing the event. The beliefs of the executive, represented in Table 1, provided the best predictive measure to determine if and when the decision-maker would use and take public opinion into consideration. He also determined that for all belief systems, other than guardian, executive decision-making is contingent, not on what public opinion says now, but what it will say in the future. Although his finding is inconclusive in regards to direct/causal

¹¹ Foyle, 19.

influence of public opinion on foreign policy, his argument for the beliefs model and decision context provide the groundwork for further exploration in this thesis of subsequent incidents in the Clinton administration and new research into public opinion and foreign policy for the Bush administration (2000-present).

Richard Sobel's *The Impact of Public Opinion on U.S. Foreign Policy Since Vietnam* argues that, "public opinion constrains, but does not set, American foreign policy of intervention."¹² His argument centers around the concept that public opinion, since the Vietnam War, has limited options for policy-makers.¹³ To help prove his argument, Sobel uses a simple but straightforward method of case study analysis. He reviews four of the "most prominent" foreign interventions (Vietnam War, Nicaraguan Contra funding controversy, Persian Gulf War, and the war in Bosnia).¹⁴ While not as robust as Foyle's analysis,¹⁵ his methodological approach to each case is similar. By using memoirs and personal accounts of the decision-makers, Sobel provides an initial history of the event, a review of executive policies, and public opinion for each conflict. This sets the background of understanding for each case. From this point, Sobel concludes each case with a review of public opinion's influence on the executive's policy-making. The conclusion in many ways is similar to Foyle's. Each intervention by the executive was conditional and based upon the decision context. Sobel finds that "public opinion sets limits or constraints on the discretion that policymakers have in choosing from among possible policy options."¹⁶

In Chapter Four of his book, *Controlling the Sword: The Democratic Governance of National Security*, Bruce Russett concludes that public opinion and its influence on foreign policy is conditional and lacks a "clear conclusion."¹⁷ Russett outlines four

¹² Richard Sobel, *The Impact of Public Opinion on U.S. Foreign Policy Since Vietnam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 5.

¹³ Sobel, 5.

¹⁴ Sobel, 6-8.

¹⁵ As a reminder, Foyle used three models and a determined set of variables (independent, dependent and constant) to review each case in addition to the history, executive opinion of public opinion, and public opinion.

¹⁶ Sobel, 233.

¹⁷ Bruce Russett, *Controlling the Sword: The Democratic Governance of National Security* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1990), 88.

possible interpretations of the relationship between public opinion and policy: 1. public opinion is controlling; 2. public opinion is controlled by policymakers; 3. both public opinion and policymakers are irrelevant—leaders do not obey public opinion, but neither do they control it; and 4. opinion and policy interact: as each influences each other.¹⁸ To illustrate his point, he uses various examples and Gallup Poll results exemplifying each of the four possibilities listed above. Similar to other authors, Russett discusses the education of the public to help influence opinion to support the president's policy, and conversely shows times when public opinion constrained the ability for decision-makers to act. Although education of the public is an important tool of policy maker's to influence public opinion, it is equally important to know what the public believes is the issue so the executive can target the education. His selection of cases or examples is totally contingent on their ability to fit into each of the four explanations. In his final summation, similar to Foyle and Sobel, he concludes that both public opinion and policymakers influence each other depending on the incident and situation (decision context).

Finally, in his book *Selling Intervention and War: The Presidency, the Media, and the American Public*, Jon Western takes a different approach to influence on presidential decision-making. Whereas the first three authors concentrated on whether public opinion affects the executive, Western discusses the role of elite advocacy groups. He contends that,

Elite political groups hold diverse beliefs about the world and the nature of the international system, and these views lead to similarly diverse ideas and expectations about the nature and severity of a given threat to the country and the costs and benefits associated with the use of military force ... These elites then coalesce into one of four major advocacy groups [hardliners, reluctant warriors, selective engagers, and liberals] which promote their views for or against the use of force. I hypothesize that the decision to use force or not is the result of the competition among these advocacy groups and their relative abilities to capture and mobilize public and political support for their views ... advocacy groups whose views are

¹⁸ Russett, 87-88.

not shared by the president can influence presidential action by increasing public and political opposition to the president's views.¹⁹

In his argument, the public is a pawn to be used by various advocacy groups to support their beliefs. Each advocacy group must weigh the "information flow and public predisposition"²⁰ regarding the incident to decide how to best influence the public to the end goal. The end state or decision by the administration is determined by four factors:

1. the beliefs of the president and the degree of cohesion within his administration
2. the relative distribution of information and collective action assets among the opposition groups
3. the role of the news media
4. the duration of the crisis.²¹

How best to influence and use these four factors will determine the nation's use of force.

Similar to both Foyle and Sobel, Western utilizes a case study analysis approach to illustrate the influence of public opinion. His five cases are: U.S. response to intervention requests in Dien Bien Phu, Lebanon, Grenada, Bosnia, and the war in Iraq. His analysis centers on the history, political beliefs for intervention by each advocacy group, and a review of policy decisions for each conflict based on the four factors mentioned earlier. His findings are consistent and expansive with those identified by the three previous authors. In summary, Western concludes: 1. competing beliefs by policy elites exist and matter – elites perceive and interpret crises and conflicts through their own world views; 2. decisions on intervention and war are the result of active and aggressive campaigns for or against a particular war; 3. public opinion can resist the persuasive efforts of the elites and advocacy groups; 4. information and its use to sway the public is now a universal commodity - all players must be careful when using information that is readily checked and disseminated by any party; and 5. unlike previous interventions where elites had a monopoly on information and could spin it to suit their purposes, the information of today is universal and provided and validated by the general

¹⁹ Jon Western, *Selling Intervention and War: The Presidency, the Media, and the American Public* (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press), 4-5.

²⁰ Western, 5.

²¹ Western, 5.

public. As a result, the public develops an unrealistic expectation of forceful interventions. Similar to each of the previous authors, Western considers beliefs of the president and situational context of the decision to be key factors in weighing the constraining affects of public opinion. Equally revealing as a possible foreshadow of insights into Clinton's case, he places significance on the news media in the executive's decision-making.

Since Vietnam, authors such as Douglas Foyle, Richard Sobel, Bruce Russett and Jon Western argue for the conditional constraining effect of public opinion. Powlick summarizes the current wisdom: "Public opinion becomes increasingly salient over time, as shown particularly by Vietnam and its long aftermath. This has manifested itself generally in tighter constraints since Vietnam."²² All four authors present compelling evidence for the constraining effect of public opinion from the side of the executive's beliefs and context situation. Their strengths are their ability to look into the mind of the decision-maker and identify the individual's foundational beliefs about the constraining effects of public opinion that initially structured the policy-maker's concept of correct foreign policy for a specific event. Additionally, each author chose to review the decision context of the environment in which the foreign policy decision was to be made by the executive and discussed the use of education to mitigate the effect of unsupportive public opinion. Their method can be summarized in a simple equation to get foreign policy constraint. Foyle, Sobel, Russet, and Western have three common variables that impact foreign policy decision-making by the executive:

²² Powlick, 5.

B_E = Beliefs of the Executive
 D_E = Decision Context of the Executive
 P = Public Opinion

} = F_C or Foreign Policy Constraint

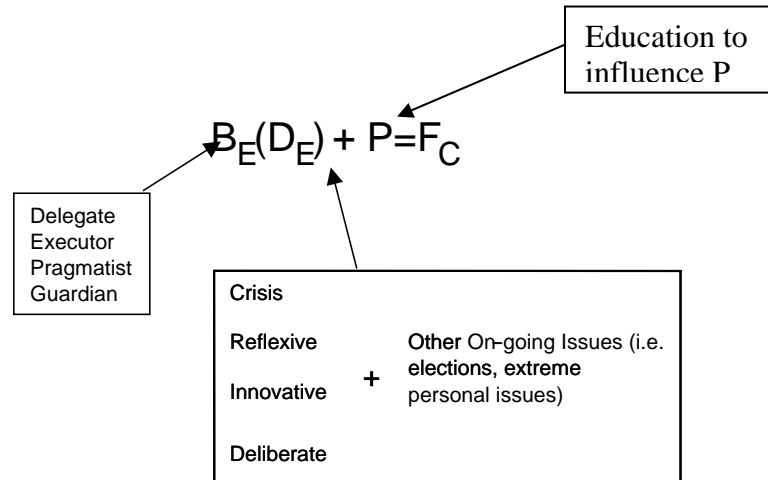


Figure 1. Foreign Policy Constraint According to Experts

Modifying any one of these will affect how much constraint there is on foreign policy, which will help provide some insight into the foreign policy decision of the executive.

1. What's Missing? Drill Down Into Public Opinion

While beliefs and decision context of the executive and education of the public are important to help determine the constraining effects on foreign policy and use of force, equally important and somewhat missed is a similar drill down into public opinion. What are the current beliefs of the public and the decision context in which the public finds itself at the time of the incident? How do these two interact and shape overall public opinion regarding the incident? What does the executive target for education to influence these variables of public opinion? In an effort to determine public opinion's constraining effect on foreign policy, we must review not just the views of the executive in terms of beliefs and decision context, but also conduct a similar analysis of public opinion.

Why is it important to take a closer look at the variables that affect public opinion? Louis Klarevas and Bruce Jentleson offer some key insight into this question. According to both, embedded in public opinion are central beliefs concerning use of

force. These beliefs have an impact on the overall acceptance of a specific foreign policy objective. As Klarevas summarizes it, according to Jentleson,

... public support in the United States is likely to vary as a function of the objective of the military intervention. He distinguishes three such principal policy objectives (PPOs). Foreign policy restraint (FPR) involves the use of force ‘to coerce ... an adversary engaged in aggressive actions against the United States or its interests.’ A second category, internal political change (IPC), involves ‘force used to engineer internal political change within another country whether in support of an existing government considered an ally or seeking to overthrow a government considered an adversary,’ or more generally ‘influencing the domestic political authority structure of another state.’ A third type of military intervention: humanitarian intervention (HI), or the ‘provision of emergency relief through military and other means to people suffering from famine or other gross and widespread humanitarian disasters.’²³

These can be tiered to provide a staircase of acceptability for a use of force policy among the public.

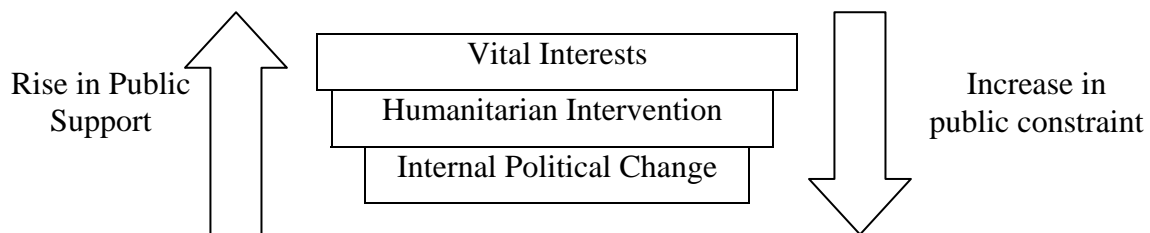


Figure 2. Staircase of Public Support and Constraint

Jentleson’s argument is bolstered by Klarevas who argues that support levels among the public can be augmented if policy-makers “sell operations as involving national interests, humanitarian or restraint objectives, and multinational assistance.”²⁴ He goes on to state, “in general, support levels also tend to be higher for operations pursuing humanitarian assistance or foreign policy restraint—as opposed to internal political change.”²⁵

²³ Klarevas. For more details, see: Bruce W. Jentleson, “The Pretty Prudent Public: Post-Vietnam American Opinion on the Use of Military Force,” *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (March 1992), 49-74 and Bruce W. Jentleson and Rebecca L. Britton, “Still Pretty Prudent: Post-Cold War American Public Opinion on the Use of Military Force,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 42, No. 4 (August 1998), 395-417.

²⁴ Klarevas, 433.

²⁵ Klarevas, 433.

Legitimacy of policy in the eyes of the public is an important determinant of the level of constraint. Whereas the public is more willing to accept and thus offers little constraint for humanitarian, multilateral, and direct vital interest missions, it is less likely to accept and thus provides a larger constraining force for operations to overturn a dictatorship or bring about some internal political change within another state. Clearly, there is a need to ascertain the public's belief of the operation/policy being advocated by the executive.

Next, similar to the executive, a review of the decision context is needed. Just as the decision context affects the executive's decision-making cycle, so too does it affect the public. In times of crisis, or as John Mueller posits "...an event or an incident that relates to international relations, directly involves the U.S. and particularly the president, and is specific, dramatic and sharply focused,"²⁶ the public is more inclined to allow the executive to act immediately and rally around the policy decision made regardless of its validity. Nelson Polsby acknowledges this effect: "invariably, the popular response to a president during an international crisis is favorable regardless of the wisdom of the policies [the president] pursues."²⁷ This phenomenon is defined as "the rally around the flag" effect.²⁸ As the time frame between incident and decision lengthens, the public is more inclined to review the issue and require additional information to support a given policy decision. Additionally, other factors, such as domestic concerns (how well the public perceives the country is doing economically, politically, and socially), may affect the public and their level of constraining affect on foreign policy.

As a result, beliefs and decision context of the public need to be added to the simple equation created for Foyle, Sobel, Russett, and Western. P or public opinion in Figure 1 expands to $B_p D_p$ or:

²⁶ John E. Mueller, *War, Presidents, and Public Opinion* (New York: Wiley, 1973), 208-213.

²⁷ Nelson Polsby, *Congress and the Presidency* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1964), 10.

²⁸ Amy Gershkoff and Shana Kushner, "The 9/11-Iraq Connection: How the Bush Administration's Rhetoric in the Iraq Conflict Shifted Public Opinion," Princeton University, 15 April 2004, <http://www.princeton.edu/~agershko/GershkoffKushnerIraqPaperMidwest.pdf#search='rally%20around%20the%20flag'> (accessed 4 June 2006).

Where P =

B_P = Beliefs of the Public

D_P = Decision Context of the Public

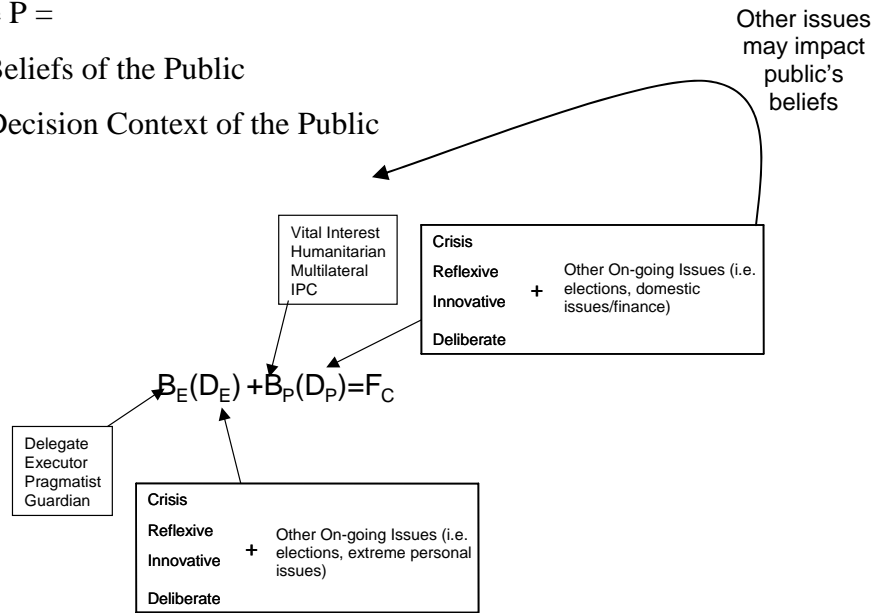


Figure 3. Foreign Policy Constraint with Added Public Breakout

For policy makers, as in the original equation (Figure 1), education can still be applied to help influence public opinion, but can now be concentrated more clearly in specific areas of B_P and D_P versus just P or public opinion. The breakout allows for a more concentrated and exact effort into a specific and definable education plan. In sum, this equation simply shows the need to consider four variables when determining the overall constraining effect on foreign policy. It also provides additional insight into the mind of the public.

Foyle, Sobel, Russett, and Western reviewed three quarters of the model presented in Figure 1. I will look at their portion as well as the breakout of public opinion beliefs and situation context in each case. The contention of many writers is that public opinion since Bosnia is once again constraining policy makers and increasing their need to educate and keep the public informed. By expanding upon the works of these authors and analyzing all four areas of the equation (Figure 3), the constraining effects of public opinion or possibly other areas can be illustrated. In the end, the importance of each as a potential constraining force in foreign policy will be discussed to determine the magnitude of its effect on public opinion.

C. METHODOLOGY

A case study analysis from each presidency (Clinton and Bush) will be used to analyze how and whether public opinion influenced decisions in regards to foreign policy while dealing with issues in response to terrorist attacks (U.S. embassy bombings in Africa and 9/11) and Iraq's WMD program. Understanding that no two cases are identical, the cases chosen for this thesis bare the following similarities among both administrations. The terrorist bombings of the U.S. embassies in Africa and attacks of September 11th 2001 occurred without notice and were considered a "crisis" situation (incidents marked by surprise with short reaction time), were perpetrated by the same group, took place on some form of U.S. sovereignty, and occurred during a time of domestic satisfaction. Under both administrations, the U.S. use of force with Iraq occurred after repeated failures of independent weapons inspectors and overt obstruction by the Iraqi government, namely Saddam Hussein, to verify that state's compliance with U.N. mandates against WMD. Additionally, the Iraq issue had a long lead in time from incident creation to U.S. response and is considered a deliberate issue.

Aside from the introduction and conclusion chapters (one and five), case study chapters (two and three) will cover one specific case for one president (example: chapter two will cover Clinton and embassy bombings). These case study chapters will have identical subsections: 1. provide an explanation of the incident or crisis that confronts the president; 2. explain the public's belief and decisional context for the incident/crisis; 3. explain the presidential beliefs regarding public opinion; 4. the executive response to public opinion; and 5. what the final policy outcome was and its effectiveness. Chapter four will review the findings from Chapters two and three and test them against a subsequent conflict which each administration confronted. Each case will cover a specific time range: the period before the incident to the initial U.S. response.

Similar to Douglas Foyle's methodology, I will provide an analysis of the public opinion belief system of each executive based on existing, publicly available sources of information. I will utilize Douglas Foyle's belief model (Table 1) to provide a clear and succinct definition for each decision-maker. Additionally, I will expand upon the works of Foyle, Sobel, Russett, and Western and discuss the public's beliefs and decision

context that surround each case. This identification will provide insight into the importance and effect of public opinion on the decision-maker and, ultimately, foreign policy.

D. HYPOTHESIS

Public opinion regarding incidents affects each decision-maker differently. The decisions made by the executive in regards to foreign policy and use of force are weighed down and constrained by the beliefs of the executive regarding the importance of public opinion on either policy formulation or policy implementation. By reviewing public opinion and how it coincides with the beliefs of the executive in regards to the role that public opinion and decision context should play in policy formulation and/or enactment, insights can be developed into the importance of public opinion on decision-makers.

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II. PRESIDENT CLINTON'S RESPONSE TO THE AFRICAN EMBASSY BOMBINGS

These acts of terrorist violence are as abhorrent as they are inhuman. We will use all the means at our disposal to bring those responsible to justice no matter what, or how long, it takes.

-- President Clinton's statement in the Rose Garden on August 7²⁹

No matter how long it takes or where it takes us, we will pursue terrorists until the cases are solved and justice is done.

-- President Clinton's Radio Address to the Nation August 8³⁰

A. INCIDENT EXPLANATION

It was August 1998 and the Clinton administration had been in office for almost six years. The electoral cycle was spinning up for the fall mid-term senate, house, and gubernatorial elections and the president was in the midst of an ongoing controversy regarding his personal actions with White House Intern, Monica Lewinsky. Public opinion of the president at the time was favorable for his policies but not for his personal conduct with 62% disliking Clinton but 68% liking his policies.³¹ Over the previous six years military forces had been engaged in two large-scale operations. The first was as a President Bush legacy engagement in Somalia to provide assistance to UN forces and their mission ensuring food and supplies were attainable to the population. The second, an action directed by President Clinton, in December 1997, utilized U.S. forces for the

²⁹ U.S. Department of State, "U.S. Embassy Bombings," http://usinfo.state.gov/is/international_security/terrorism/embassy_bombings.html (accessed 26 May 06).

³⁰ President, Radio Address by the President to the Nation, "President's Radio Address on U.S. Embassy Bombings: Terrorists will be pursued until justice is done," The White House: Office of the Press Secretary, 8 August 1998, http://usinfo.state.gov/is/Archive_Index/Presidents_Radio_Address.html (accessed 26 May 06).

³¹ Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, "It's Still The Economy They Say," 27 August 1998, <http://people-press.org/reports/display.php3?ReportID=82> (accessed 26 May 06).

purpose of acting as a “follow-on force”³² to NATO in the Balkans. Both engagements, and particularly Somalia, would have profound lessons and provide keen insights into the presidential beliefs on public opinion of Clinton. These lessons will be discussed in later sections.

Amidst the elections and personal controversies swirling around the administration, an egregious event took place on 7 August 1998. Two truck bombs placed adjacent to the U.S. embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, exploded within minutes of each other at 10:45 a.m. local time, 3:45 a.m. Washington time,³³ leaving 224 dead (12 were American) and injuring 4,800.³⁴ In Nairobi, the bomb “brought down half the embassy” and the explosion left several square blocks of downtown Nairobi ruined.³⁵ In Dar-es-Salaam most of the embassy building and some adjacent buildings were destroyed.³⁶ At the time of the explosions little was known of the bombing’s purpose or parties responsible. Some thought the explosions were state sponsored and directed by the “fundamentalist Muslim government in Iran.”³⁷ Others started to focus on a publicly little known group, al Qaeda, and its sponsor Osama bin Laden. Regardless of the responsible parties, the Clinton administration vowed to hunt down the perpetrators no matter how long it took or what sacrifices it would entail.

These acts of terrorist violence are as abhorrent as they are inhuman. We will use all the means at our disposal to bring those responsible to justice no matter what, or how long, it takes.³⁸

³² Jim Garamone, “Clinton Commits U.S. Troops to Follow-on Force,” *Armed Forces Press Service*. U.S. Department of Defense, http://www.pentagon.gov/news/Dec1997/n12191997_9712197.html (accessed 26 May 06).

³³ U.S. Department of State, “U.S. Embassy Bombings,” http://usinfo.state.gov/is/international_security/terrorism/embassy_bombings.html (accessed 26 May 06).

³⁴ Associated Press, “US Embassy Bombing Death Toll Drops,” *The New York Times*, 8 October 1998; and Majorie Miller and Dean Murphy, “The U.S. Embassy Bombings,” *The Los Angeles Times*, 9 August 1998.

³⁵ Miller and Murphy, *The Los Angeles Times*, 9 August 1998.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Seattle Times News Service, “Iran Envoy Linked to Embassy Blasts?” *The Seattle Times*, 14 August 1998, A3.

³⁸ U.S. Department of State, “U.S. Embassy Bombings,” http://usinfo.state.gov/is/international_security/terrorism/embassy_bombings.html (accessed 26 May 06).

No matter how long it takes or where it takes us, we will pursue terrorists until the cases are solved and justice is done.³⁹

The question would soon arise, would the president make good on his promise to punish those involved, what type of action would this entail, and how would his response be impacted by either his or the public's beliefs and decision context, which surrounded the incident.

1. Intervening Period between Bombing and U.S. Response (8 – 19 August 1998)

The United States did not take action immediately following the bombings on 7 August 1998. The Clinton administration required several variables to be answered before action. Although provided after the subsequent U.S. response, the criteria Clinton mentioned during his radio address to the nation on 22 August 1998 help clarify the variables that the administration focused on during the intervening days between crisis and U.S. response. "From the moment we learned of the bombings our mission was clear: Identify those responsible; bring them to justice; protect our citizens from future attacks."⁴⁰ Key to this outlook was to find out clearly who had perpetrated the attacks and then formulate an appropriate response. For Clinton, "beyond the public events, I spent most of my time with our national security team discussing how we were going to respond to the African attacks."⁴¹ Clinton over the next few weeks delivered mostly televised and radio speeches both to the United States and international community

³⁹ President, Radio Address by the President to the Nation, "President's Radio Address on U.S. Embassy Bombings: Terrorists will be pursued until justice is done," The White House: Office of the Press Secretary, 8 August 1998, http://usinfo.state.gov/is/Archive_Index/Presidents_Radio_Address.html (accessed 26 May 06).

⁴⁰ President, The President's Radio Address, "Weekly Compilation of Presidential Document," United States Government Printing Office, 22 August 1998, <http://frwebgate3.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/waisgate.cgi?WAISdocID=7702722138+14+0+0&WASISaction=retrieve> (accessed 27 May 06)

⁴¹ Clinton, William J, *My Life* (New York: Knopf, 2004), 798.

stressing the U.S. resolve to find and punish those responsible and bolster solidarity with those hurt by the bombings.⁴²

Although one could argue that this is expected of a president in a time of conflict, these actions and the use of the media to speak to the people emphasize the need to educate the American public and to keep them informed. Early in Clinton's presidential career he shared his opinion of his job as executive:

If I had to say what I needed to do to improve as a leader, it would be to find ways to be able to share with the American people what I know to be the facts here, what we're doing, and to give them some sense that I'm listening to them and they have some input, but that I'm moving the country in the right direction.⁴³

This shows Clinton placed emphasis on the need to inform the American people of the direction the administration was moving. This reliance on education and communication with the public was reiterated at the end of his first term in office when he remarked,

... that explaining to the American people what our interests, our values, and our policies are requires a more systematic and regular explaining. In a time when the overall framework is not clear and when people are bombarded with information, I think a President has to do that with greater frequency ...⁴⁴

Reviewing Foyle's belief model, this behavior illustrates the positive need to ensure public opinion during policy formulation. The clear intent was to ensure that when a decision was made, the public would accept the decision. Tacitly, this emphasis on informing the public paints the picture of its importance to Clinton and the importance of the public.

Although Clinton denied using polls to make decisions, he acknowledged taking them into account:

⁴² During the period 8 August 1998 through 19 Aug 98 (the time between the attacks and US response, Clinton made 26 remarks, speeches, letters and addresses to the US and international community (none were question and answer sessions, all were canned statements and speeches – annotated in William J. Clinton, *Public Papers of the President of the United States: William Jefferson Clinton 1998*, Book II, (Washington DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1999).

⁴³ George C. Edwards III, "Frustration and Folly: Bill Clinton and the Public Presidency," in Colin Campbell and Bert A. Rockman, eds., *The Clinton Presidency: First Appraisals* (Chatham, N.J.: Chatham House, 1996), 255.

⁴⁴ Dan Goodgame and Michael Duffy, "Blending Force with Diplomacy," *Time*, 31 October 1994, 35.

I can tell you categorically that I do not use polls to decide what position to take ... I have used polling information to try to make sure I understand where the American people are, what they know and what they don't know, what information they have, and to determine what arguments might best support a position that I believe is the right position for the country.⁴⁵

Interestingly, this concern with public opinion was also apparent two years earlier during a similar incident. In 1996, while in the midst of a presidential reelection year, the Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia were bombed by a terrorist group. Immediately, Clinton's "top political strategist, Dick Morris, was hard at work conducting polls to gauge the public's reaction to the bombing. 'Whenever there was a crisis, I ordered an immediate poll,' Morris recalls. 'I was concerned about how Clinton looked in the face of [the attack] and whether people blamed him.'"⁴⁶ The public's importance to the Clinton administration and to the top decision-maker becomes increasingly clear.

Satisfying the need to find culpable evidence to ascertain the identity of those responsible for the bombings, on 14 August 1998, "the CIA and FBI both confirmed that al Qaeda was responsible..."⁴⁷ The Clinton administration had been aware of bin Laden and his criminal organization for a number of years and the link between al Qaeda and the embassy bombings was not unique. Under Clinton's watch, the CIA in 1996 created an exclusive station under the Counterterrorism Center to monitor bin Laden and his network.⁴⁸ Clinton also makes reference to the three separate incidents in 1998 where bin Laden had threatened U.S. interest.

In late February, bin Laden had issued a fatwa calling for attacks on American military and civilian targets anywhere in the world. In May, he had said his supporters would hit U.S. targets in the Gulf and talked about bringing war to America. In June, in an interview with an American

⁴⁵ Richard Reeves, "Government by the Polls," *Greensboro News and Record*, 21 December 1994, A15.

⁴⁶ Byron York, National Review White House Correspondent, "Clinton Has No Clothes: What 9/11 revealed about the ex-president," *National Review*, 17 December 2001, <http://www.nationalreview.com/york/york-issue112901.shtml> (accessed 28 May 2006).

⁴⁷ Clinton, *My Life*, 798.

⁴⁸ CBSNews.com, "Bin Laden Expert Steps Forward," 60 Minutes Interview, 14 November 2004, <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/11/12/60minutes/main655407.shtml> (accessed 28 May 2006).

journalist, he had threatened to bring down U.S. military aircraft with anti-aircraft missiles.⁴⁹

In fact, “the initial evidence indicated Osama bin Laden’s network had launched the attacks.”⁵⁰ Clinton’s assessment was reaffirmed after the U.S. response when the chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General Hugh Shelton, announced, “As many of you are aware, our intelligence community has provided us with convincing information based on a variety of intelligence sources, that Osama bin Laden’s network of terrorists was involved in the planning, the financing and the execution of the attacks on U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania.”⁵¹ Secretary of Defense William Cohen reiterated, “There’s been a series of reports that we have analyzed, statements by Osama bin Laden himself, other information coming in as recently as yesterday about future attacks being planned against the United States. We are satisfied there has been a convincing body of evidence that leads us to this conclusion.”⁵² With confirmation of the threat and perpetrator of the bombings, Clinton and his staff pushed forward for finalization of the U.S. response.

In the midst of determining a U.S. response to the bombings, on 17 August 1998, President Clinton admitted in taped testimony that he had an “improper physical relationship”⁵³ with White House intern Monica Lewinsky. On the same day he admitted before the nation that he “misled people” about his relationship.⁵⁴ What role this had in delaying or determining the final response to the embassy bombing and whether it affected both his and the public’s belief and decisional context is worth exploring.

According to Clinton in his book *My Life*, “My team [national security council] was worried about one other thing: my testimony before the grand jury in three days, on August 17. They were afraid that it would make me reluctant to strike, or that if I did order the attack, I would be accused of doing it to divert public attention from my

⁴⁹ Clinton, *My Life*, 797.

⁵⁰ Clinton, *My Life*, 797.

⁵¹ “Text of Cohen, Shelton Briefing on the Strikes,” *USA Today*, 20 August 1998.

⁵² “Text of Cohen, Shelton Briefing on the Strikes,” *USA Today*, 20 August 1998.

⁵³ CNN.com, “Clinton Admits To 'Wrong' Relationship With Lewinsky,” Washington, 17 August 1998, <http://www.cnn.com/ALLPOLITICS/1998/08/17/speech/> (accessed 28 May 06).

⁵⁴ CNN.com, “Clinton Admits To 'Wrong' Relationship With Lewinsky,” Washington, 17 August 1998, <http://www.cnn.com/ALLPOLITICS/1998/08/17/speech/> (accessed 28 May 06).

problems...”⁵⁵ According to public polls at the time, the public’s opinion of the president personally dropped 20 points due to his misconduct but their opinion of the president’s job remained strong. The poll conducted by CNN immediately after his speech to the nation on 17 August 1998 showed the contrast:

How Clinton Is Handling His Job as President

Approve	62%
Disapprove	32%

Opinion of Clinton

Favorable	40%
Unfavorable	48% ⁵⁶

Although, the polls show the public drawing a distinctive line between personal and public life and work, it is uncertain how Clinton saw these incidents or how the public’s disapproval of Clinton personally affected his final decisions on how to strike the bin Laden network.

Clinton’s book, *My Life*, offers some insight of the events and decision-making process, “I told them [national security team]... if the recommendation was to strike on the twentieth, then that’s what we would do. I said I would handle my personal problems.”⁵⁷ He implies no relationship between his personal problems, public opinion and the decision to strike, but did this situation affect his outlook and the public’s? Was public opinion a dominant constraining force in his final policy decision towards the embassy bombings or was it something else like his ongoing personal problems – a concept of decision context?

2. U.S. Response

After almost three weeks, President Clinton authorized action against Osama bin Laden and his al Qaeda network. On 20 August 1998, 62 U.S. Navy surface ships and a

⁵⁵ Clinton, *My Life*, 799.

⁵⁶ CNN.com, “Poll: More Americans Satisfied With Clinton’s Explanation: But peoples’ opinion of the president falls sharply,” <http://www.cnn.com/ALLPOLITICS/1998/08/17/poll/> (accessed 28 May 06).

⁵⁷ Clinton, *My Life*, 799.

submarine in the Arabian Gulf and Red Sea carried out Operation INFINITE REACH.⁵⁸ These assets fired approximately seventy Tomahawk cruise missiles.⁵⁹ The targets were alleged al Qaeda terrorist training camps at Khost, Afghanistan, and a pharmaceutical plant in Khartoum, Sudan, suspected of being a link in the chain of chemical weapons production. The firing of 70 Tomahawk cruise missiles was the “most formidable U.S. military assault ever against a non-state sponsor of terrorism.”⁶⁰ “For civilian leaders, the missiles appealed because they were accurate and there was minimal risk of U.S. casualties.”⁶¹ Immediately following the response, Clinton notified the American public of the U.S. action. In his national address he stated,

I ordered this action for four reasons: First, because we had convincing evidence these groups played the key role in the embassy bombings Kenya and Tanzania. Second, because these groups have executed terrorist attacks against Americans in the past. Third, because we have compelling information that they were planning additional terrorist attacks against our citizens and others with the inevitable collateral casualties we saw so tragically in Africa. And, fourth, because they are seeking to acquire chemical weapons and other dangerous weapons.⁶²

Similar to his presidential statement in the interim period between the bombings and U.S. response, Clinton kept the public informed of the action and reasons for the strike. According to Foyle this would imply not only a desire to ensure public opinion is informed prior to a foreign policy decision but also after a decision is made. By working both sides of public opinion, Clinton the “Delegate,” as defined by Foyle, is developed. Before this assertion can be formally made though, some additional concepts need to be explored: 1. what role did the public play in Clinton’s decision to use missiles versus

⁵⁸ Bryan Bender, “Poor U.S. Intelligence May Have Led to Sudan Strikes,” *Jane’s Defense Weekly*, 2 September 1998.

⁵⁹ Steven Lee Meyers, “Attack Aimed 70 Missiles at Targets 2,500 Miles Apart,” *New York Times*, 21 August 1998.

⁶⁰ William C. Banks, “‘To prevent and Deter’ International Terrorism: The U.S. Response to the Kenya and Tanzania Embassy Bombings,” *National Security Studies* (Syracuse University and Johns Hopkins University, 1999), 3, http://www.law.syr.edu/faculty/banks/terrorism/dummyfl/prevent_and_deter.pdf#search=khoobar%20tower%20lack%20of%20response. (accessed 26 May 06).

⁶¹ *Ibid*, 14.

⁶² President, “Address to the Nation by the President from Martha’s Vineyard, Massachusetts,” 20 August 1998, http://www.state.gov/www/regions/africa/strike_clinton980820.html (accessed 27 May 06).

other conventional or unconventional methods?; 2. understanding that the public had made a distinction between his personal and professional life, what effect did the ongoing scandal have on Clinton, his decisions, and timing to use force?; and 3. what constraining factors, if any, were presented by public opinion which may have affected the policy of force that was chosen?

B. PUBLIC OPINION TOWARDS EMBASSY BOMBINGS

Judging the impact of these bombings on the public is difficult, because there is a lack of media attention and public query by agencies such as Gallup. The Pew Research Center conducted a poll shortly after the bombings, from 7-11 August 1998, that found that approximately 64% of the public had monitored the details of the bombings.⁶³ Not an unlikely number, but this single figure appears to be the extent of the public's query by news agencies prior to the U.S. response. What is remarkable is the disproportionate number of polls asking the public about the Lewinsky scandal versus the bombings of American embassies in Africa. From my research, the number of polls asking opinions in the Lewinsky case and Clinton's standing with the public far outweighs any polls to assess the U.S. response to the terrorist attacks on the embassies in Africa. According to the Roper Center for Public Opinion Research at the University of Connecticut,⁶⁴ during the period 7 August – 1 September 1998, 21 studies were conducted by various polling agencies across the United States. Of these, the majority -- 13 -- concerned the Clinton scandal.⁶⁵

There were two polls that mixed questions about Clinton/Lewinsky and the terror attacks and U.S. response and two directly on opinion about the cruise missile strikes. Among these, even the CBS News/NY Times polls, which discussed the scandal amidst the attack were skewed in favor of the scandal – for example: of the 48 questions asked

⁶³ Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, "Lewinsky Testimony A Yawn," 13 August 1998, <http://people-press.org/reports/print.php3?ReportID=83> (accessed 24 May 06).

⁶⁴ The Roper Center collects poll data and surveys from across the nation and stores them on their searchable database

⁶⁵ The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, University of Connecticut, search string: 7 August – 1 September 1998. http://roperweb.ropercenter.uconn.edu/cgi-bin/hsrun.exe/Roperweb/Catalog40/Catalog40.htx;start=HS_StartQuery1 (accessed 15 May 06).

the first 44 concerned the president and the ongoing controversy, the last 4 discussed the missile strikes.⁶⁶ The vast majority of media activity at the time was concentrated on judging the public's reaction to Clinton, the scandal, and Clinton's 17 August testimony where he admitted to an improper relationship. In the face of attacks on U.S. sovereignty, the media's preoccupation with the scandal does injustice to the impact and importance that should have been made of the embassy bombings. This created a public education and knowledge void and a dearth of information measuring public reaction to the embassy bombings and subsequent response. But, sad as this concentration on the personal life of Clinton may seem, it provides a keen insight into one aspect that affected public opinion and potentially Clinton at the time. Clinton's improper relationship may have impacted the public's view and knowledge of the attacks and their importance to U.S. security. As a result, the beliefs of the public and decision context may have been skewed by this and other factors ongoing in the United States. Because public opinion is not clear, it will be increasingly important to take a closer look at the decisional context and beliefs of the public that may have influenced the public and its assessment of the incident.

1. Decision Context

The public's decisional context (D_P) in the United States at the time of the embassy bombing was anything but simple. U.S. public opinion was focused on several areas all of which complicated the public's decision and opinion in regards to the embassy bombings. First, from the outset of the administration, Clinton was elected for domestic and economic reasons. The first President Bush, despite winning the Gulf War in minimal time and with minimal casualties, was not considered to be a domestic president, but saw his role as leading in the international foreign policy arena. The public soured by recession, elected Clinton on the foundation of "It's the economy, stupid!" Taking a lesson from this, Clinton observed,

⁶⁶ The Roper Center, "CBS News and The New York Times Poll # 98008D: Missile Attack/Scandal," 19-20 August 1998, http://roperweb.ropercenter.uconn.edu/cgi-bin/hsrun.exe/Roperweb/Catalog40/Catalog40.htx;start=summary_link?archno=USCBSNYT1998-98008D (accessed 15 May 2006).

You know, the country will not permit a president to engage in foreign policy to the exclusion of dealing with the domestic problems. But the country might permit a president to engage in domestic problems to the exclusion of foreign policy, until some wheel runs off somewhere, and then it'll be obvious that that was an error as well.⁶⁷

As a result, Clinton promised to focus on domestic and economic issues like “a laser beam”⁶⁸ to help improve the U.S. economy. The public opinion environment of the country provided more support for a focus on domestic policies than for an outward focus on foreign policy.

Reviewing the 1995 (1990-1994 time period) and 1999 (1995-1998 time period) *American Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy* documents by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations (CCFR), reemphasizes the domestic focus of public opinion. According to the 1995 version,

Crime and unemployment are considered the biggest problems facing the country by the public. Foreign policy related problems now constitute the smallest number of overall problems since 1978 for the public and the smallest ever among leaders. The preferred goals of foreign policy address matters directly related to local concerns.⁶⁹

When asked, “What do you feel are the two or three biggest problems facing the country today?” neither the public nor the leadership listed national security concerns, as shown in Table 4.

⁶⁷ Jim Hoagland, “Image Isn’t Everything,” *Washington Post*, 31 May 1994, A17.

⁶⁸ PBS.com, “The Presidents: William Jefferson Clinton,” http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/presidents/42_clinton/index.html (accessed 15 May 2006).

⁶⁹ John E. Reilly, ed., *American Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy 1995*, The Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, 7, <http://www.ccf.org/publications/opinion/American%20Public%20Opinion%20Report%201995.pdf> (accessed 30 May 2006).

The Public	The Leaders
1. Crime (42%)	1. Crime (33%)
2. Unemployment (20%)	2. Economy: unspecified (23%)
3. Health care/insurance (19%)	3. Budget deficit (20%)
4. Drug abuse (18%)	4. Education (15%)
5. Poverty: hunger, homelessness (15%)	5. Dissatisfaction with government (15%)
6. Education: improving schools (12%)	6. Immorality (13%)
7. Economy: unspecified (10%)	7. Health care/insurance (13%)
8. Dissatisfaction with government (9%)	8. Unemployment (11%)
9. Budget deficit (9%)	9. Racism (7%)
10. Immorality (8%)	10. Foreign relations/policy: unspecified (7%)

Table 4. Public versus Leader List of Concerns⁷⁰

Foreign policy or other international issues were listed 10th for the Leaders and not present for the Public. The concerns of the public created an environment and decision context inundated by domestic concerns. Early in the Clinton presidency the public had set the contextual framework for the administration. Domestic policies and concentration on the health of the nation would rule many of the decisions to be made. Concentration at home would decrease the public's understanding and insight into potential intervention problems. This in turn would reduce the public's emphasis and constraining effect when international issues arose.

One year after the embassy bombings, CCFR released the 1999 report. The mood of the public was more upbeat and extremely supportive of Clinton's internally focused policy agenda. "The United States was enjoying its greatest economic success in decades. The stock market was at an all-time high, unemployment was under 5% and the massive federal budget deficit was replaced by an estimated \$50-100 billion surplus."⁷¹ The mood and outlook for the public was positive and the desire not to rock the boat was strong. Compared to the atmosphere in 1994, the internal focus was even more concentrated. As a reflection of general public interest in foreign affairs, interest in local news ranked highest with 60% and international news and issues concerning countries

⁷⁰ Reilly, *American Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy 1995*, 11.

⁷¹ John E. Reilly, ed., *American Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy 1999*, The Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, 2,
<http://www.ccf.org/publications/opinion/American%20Public%20Opinion%20Report%201999.pdf>
 (accessed 30 May 2006).

outside the United States the lowest at 29%.⁷² Similar to the 1995 report, the public was asked about the two largest problems facing the nation. The results present two interesting context issues. First, domestic concerns and focus are still numbers 1-10, validating the idea that the public's decision context was one of domestically focused attention and awareness. Second and more revealing, number two on the public's list and number five on the leaders' list is a new topic, "The President/Bill Clinton."⁷³ The decision context for the public at the time of the embassy bombings was 1. internal domestic focus to ensure that the economy's resurgence continued and 2. a general fascination with presidential impropriety.

Unlike the improved economic conditions that the United States enjoyed in 1998, use of force since the Clinton administration took office had involved repeated failure and indecision, which created another contextual setting for the public. The public drew an understanding of the Clinton administration's ability and dedication to force during several specific incidents prior to the embassy bombings. Somalia, as one example, helped frame the decision context for the public for future engagements. During the U.S. involvement in Somalia, an action begun by Clinton's predecessor as assistance to a UN humanitarian mission, the public saw an incident that changed forms and policies. The Clinton administration failed to provide any policy guidance. As Berman and Goldman point out,

As 1993 progressed, Operation Restore Hope, the shipping of food and medicine to starving Somalis, became a UN mission more intent on peacekeeping and nation building than on humanitarian assistance. Throughout the summer and into the early fall, the Clinton administration's plan for Somalia seemed confused.⁷⁴

The confusion over Clinton's foreign policy spread to the public and was compounded with the death of 18 servicemen in the attempt to capture warlord Mohammed Farrah

⁷² Reilly, *American Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy 1999*, 6.

⁷³ Reilly, *American Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy 1999*, 7.

⁷⁴ Larry Berman and Emily O. Goldman, "Clinton's Foreign Policy at Midterm," in *The Clinton Presidency: First Appraisals*, ed. Colin Campbell and Bert A. Rockman (Chatham, NJ: Chatham House, 1996), 304.

Aided.⁷⁵ The end result was low approval among the public for a conflict which rated at the lowest end of tolerance among the public's threshold for use of force and military engagement. The UN mission and use of American troops had evolved into a nation-building or internal political change action. As discussed earlier in the introduction, this action rated lowest in approval in public opinion's staircase of public support and constraint (Figure 2). As a result,

U.S. public opinion grew critical and questioning. In turn, congressional critics of the mission demanded explanations and a focal point for blame. Confronting a crisis it had not anticipated, President Bill Clinton's administration responded in a way that epitomized its conflicted view of using military force ... it proclaimed within days that U.S. military personnel would be pulling out of Somalia after a decent interval of a few months. The lesson was clear: the administration regarded the military mission as a failure.⁷⁶

Somalia, the first opportunity for the Clinton administration to show its foreign policy prowess, failed and helped shape the public's concept of use of force under Clinton and ultimately affected the decision context for the embassy bombings.

The last issue that shaped the public decision context concerns Clinton's inappropriate relationship with Monica Lewinsky. According to the 1999 CCFR, the "scandal involving President Clinton and a White House intern shifted the focus of national attention and became almost an obsession for the American Press and the Washington establishment for the entire year [1998]."⁷⁷ Even before the scandal, Bert Rockman observed, "It is not clear that the various sexual scandals that have been reputed have had any direct impact on the Clinton's fortunes, but they have added an aura of suspicion and distrust of Clinton."⁷⁸ The media and public were pre-occupied with

⁷⁵ Scharnhorst, "Keeping the Peace in the 21st Century: A Look at U.N. Peacekeeping and its American Support," <http://coweb.cc.gatech.edu:8080/PubPolicy/356> (accessed 30 May 2006).

⁷⁶ Robert F. Baumann and Lawrence A. Yates with Versalle F. Washington, "My Clan Against the World: US and Coalition Forces in Somalia 1992-1994," (Combat Studies Institute Press: Fort Leavenworth, Kansas), <http://www-cgsc.army.mil/carl/download/csipubs/clan.pdf#search=US%20mogadishu%20and%20somalia%20public%20opinion> (accessed 4 June 2006).

⁷⁷ Reilly, *American Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy 1999*, 3.

⁷⁸ Bert A. Rockman, "Leadership Style and the Clinton Presidency," in *The Clinton Presidency: First Appraisals*, ed. Colin Campbell and Bert A. Rockman (Chatham, NJ: Chatham House, 1996), 333.

this issue and it arguably helped frame the decision context for the embassy bombings. In the end, the embassy bombings, while important crises for the United States, were overwhelmed by ongoing issues within the United States. The public's focus was elsewhere.

2. Beliefs

The decisional context variables in the previous section make it difficult to ascertain through polls and statements the actual beliefs of the public (B_P), because the public's and the media's attention were focused on the improper relationship of Clinton versus the embassy bombings. A review of articles available in Lexis/Nexis illustrates this point. Utilizing the power search function, a search of the New York Times, Washington Post and Seattle Times for the period from 7 to 19 August revealed that the public's belief system was being inundated by other issues by a factor of almost 3 to 1.

	New York Times	The Washington Post	The Seattle Times	TOTAL
Embassy Bombing Articles	19	25	20	64
Clinton Relationship Articles	77	66	34	170

Table 5. Periodical Comparison (Embassy Bombings and Clinton Relationship)⁷⁹

This preoccupation created an information void within the media in which actual public insight into the embassy bombings prior to the U.S. response is not measured. Compare this with coverage of the October 2000 attack on the U.S.S. Cole; over a similar 12-day period after the incident an opposite media response is recorded.

⁷⁹ Lexis/Nexis Power Search using the following keywords: Clinton and Relationship, Embassy Bombings. Timeframe: 8/7/98 to 8/19/98 (time frame based on period between attacks and US response where belief system and discussion should be occurring to help formulate US response policy.)

	New York Times	The Washington Post	The Seattle Times	TOTAL
Embassy Bombing Articles	19	25	20	64
U.S.S. Cole Bombings	71	58	29	158

Table 6. Periodical Comparison (Embassy Bombings and U.S.S. Cole)⁸⁰

The African embassy bombings did not generate coverage by the media of the public's ideas concerning the proper course of U.S. action in response. Reviewing the actual articles that the three newspapers carried about the embassy bombings, the overwhelming majority discussed the ongoing investigations and the after effects/damage of the bombings. Public opinion was absent. Trying to determine whether the U.S. public saw this action as a threat to U.S. vital interests and whether or not the United States should act alone or in a multilateral fashion is short of actual hard evidence.

Additionally, the beliefs of the public may have been affected by the decisional context of the U.S. domestic situation. Occurring during a time of increased economic prosperity and growth, the beliefs of the public regarding appropriate action or concern into the embassy bombings may have been affected. When pollster Andrew Kohut discussed Clinton's situation, he did not even mention the embassy bombings:

A similar delayed effect could reverse initial opinion today with regard to Mr. Clinton. If the economy and bull market begin to sour, the public could eventually condemn the president for a scandal that diverted Washington's attention while the nation's prosperity withered away.⁸¹

With little media focus, the public's attention and concern for the embassy bombings was diminished and unrecorded. Unless education was introduced to reengage the public, these conditions might be seen to diminish the constraining effects of public opinion. If no one is paying attention, a president should be free to act as he chooses. The paradox will come when we see how Clinton viewed these effects.

⁸⁰ Lexis/Nexis Power Search using the following keywords: Cole, Timeframe: 10/12/00 to 10/24/00 (time frame based on 12 days from incident – same number of days that elapsed between embassy bombings and US response)

⁸¹ Andrew Kohut, "Clinton and the Court of Public Opinion," *The New York Times*, 17 August 1998, Section A, 15.

In view of the dearth of public information during the intervening period, a review of after action polls can help suggest the impact of the bombings on the public (a complete review of the decision to use U.S. missile strikes will be made in section C and D). While the public supports U.S. action for incidents that threaten vital interests and are in the best interest of the United States, other actions are looked at less approvingly and public constraint is more pronounced upon decision-makers. According to polls taken after the United States launch of cruise missiles at two select targets in Afghanistan and Sudan, 66%⁸² or the majority of Americans approved of the U.S. strikes. While support for the strikes may be viewed as a rally around the flag effect since poll data was taken on the day of the U.S. strikes, reviewing additional question data from two polls provides more insight into the incident and its effect on the beliefs of the public. USA Today/CNN and CBS News Polls taken on 20 August 1998⁸³ asked directly whether the U.S. actions constituted a reaction to U.S. national interests or were an attempt to divert attention from the Lewinsky scandal.

Gallup/USA Today-CNN (8/20): “Why do you, personally, think Bill Clinton ordered today’s military strike—SOLELY because he felt it was in the best interests of the country or IN PART to divert public attention away from the Monica Lewinsky controversy?” (Emphasis added)

Best interests of U.S. - 58%
Divert attention - 36%
Don’t know, Other (volunteered) - 6%

CBS News (8/20): “Do you think the timing of these attacks had more to do with U.S. military judgment as to when and how to respond, or do you think the timing of these attacks had more to do with taking the public’s mind off of President Clinton’s troubles?”

Best U.S. military judgment - 55%
Divert attention - 27%
Both (volunteered) - 4%
Don’t know - 14%

⁸² George Gallup Jr., *The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion 1998* (Wilmington, Delaware: Scholarly Resources, Inc.,) 1999, 201.

⁸³ U.S. Information Agency, “Majority of Americans Support Strikes Against Terrorist Sites,” by. Alvin Richman, Office of Research and Media Reaction, 25 August 1998, <http://www.usembassy-israel.org.il/publish/press/security/archive/1998/august/ds2831.htm> (accessed 5 June 2006).

With a majority of the public seeing the actions as in the U.S. best interest, the public can be seen as believing that the embassy attacks were against the national interests of the United States and thus constraint on action by the executive would be minimized.

Additionally, in George Gallup's, *The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion 1998*, a chronology of 55 events "is provided to enable the reader to relate poll results to specific events, or series of events, that may have influenced public opinion."⁸⁴ This chronology provides insight into what Gallup and others believe may have influenced the beliefs of the public during 1998. The listing of events includes the following:

Event Subject
Clinton Controversy = 27 (17 out of 32 from 1 Jan – 20 Aug 1998)
Iraq Situation = 12
Embassy Bombings in Africa = 1
U.S. financial exuberance = 1
Clinton Fundraising Issue = 1
FDA and Viagra = 1
India Nuclear Testing = 1
Microsoft Anti-trust = 1
Senate Rejects Smoking Settlement = 1
Gunman Kills 2 police Officers in Washington = 1
United Auto Workers Strike = 1
House Approves Campaign Reform = 1
McGwire Breaks Maris record = 1
Wye Memorandum signed = 1
Hurricane Mitch Destruction = 1
Shuttle Discovery and John Glenn = 1
Livingston resigns because of affair = 1
Sensitive info given to China = 1

Table 7. Events that Influenced Public Opinion⁸⁵

The embassy bombings only received one mention. In contrast, almost half the events (27 out of 55) identified as issues impacting public opinion for the year concerned the

⁸⁴ George Gallup, Jr., *The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion 1998* (Wilmington, Delaware: Scholarly Resources, Inc), 1999, xvii.

⁸⁵ Each category is a subjective title I provide to encompass the various items Gallup lists. His list includes a total of 53 dates and subsequent subjects that helped influence public opinion. George Gallup, Jr., *The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion 1998* (Wilmington, Delaware: Scholarly Resources, Inc), 1999, xvii-xxiv.

Lewinsky scandal. This single ongoing issue may have significantly affected the decision context for the public.

Taken in an aggregate the combination of the sound domestic situation of the United States (create a less constraining public opinion belief), reduced media attention due to ongoing Clinton controversy (less constraining), and after action polls of the U.S. response showing the action was in the best interest of the country (less constraining), reveals a belief structure for the public that would allow the administration and president the leeway to act. The constraining environment of the public's belief system would have been diminished.

3. Summation of Public Opinion

When reviewing D_P or the public's decision context and B_P or the beliefs of the public, three major issues affected the environment within which the public interpreted the embassy bombings. The first was the overall emphasis on domestic issues in the public's attention. This created a less constraining effect on foreign policy for the Clinton administration. Essentially, as long as the economy was growing and prosperity within the United States was sustained, the public's reactions to foreign policy decisions were likely to be more lax.

Second, the Clinton scandal created a media monopoly within the United States. The public, media, and Washington were absorbed into the happenings of the scandal and the coverage garnered by it overwhelmed all other potential media events, namely the embassy bombings. One would generally expect after an attack such as those conducted in Africa, that polls would be taken and studied to determine what the public thinks and what actions it expects of the executive. The scandal was absorbing the majority of the press and public's attention. Also, the scandal did little to affect Clinton's good public satisfaction percentages for job performance. Domestic performance and desire to ensure the continued internal success of the U.S. economy helped to minimize the effects of the scandal, thus decreasing its constraining ability on the president and his decisions. Additionally, the pure fact that the scandal monopolized the media led to a less educated public in terms of the implications of the embassy bombings thus decreasing the

constraining effects of the scandal and possibly the effects of Clinton's failure in previous foreign policy/use of force engagements.

Finally, and counterintuitive to the first, is the expected more constraining aspect of previous failures of the Clinton administration in the area of military interventions. Somalia, as one example, showed the failure of Clinton foreign policy and "waffling"⁸⁶ indecisiveness of its abilities in the international arena. Given earlier statements by Clinton and his emphasis on the domestic over foreign policy, this should not be a shock. But one would expect that the ineptness of Clinton in this area would elicit a more constraining effect on foreign policy from the public. Taken in combination and acting within an aggregate of D_P , the assumption would be that the constraining effect was overwhelmed by the loosening of constraint from the other two issues. Additionally, in the face of the greater latitude allocated to Clinton by the public from the emphasis on domestic and scandal awareness, his poor track record within the foreign policy/use of force realm may have been a greater limiter to Clinton in his decision context than within the public. In sum, in order of priority for the public:

$$P = D_P B_P$$

D_P

Focus on Domestic = less constraining effect

Scandal = less constraining effect

Previous Engagements = more constraining effect

$$D_P = \text{less} + \text{less} + \text{more}$$

$$D_P = \text{less constraining effect}$$

B_P

Good economy = less constraining effect

Less media focus on bombings/less public awareness = less constraining effect

Best/vital interest = less constraining effect

$$B_P = \text{less} + \text{less} + \text{less}$$

$$B_P = \text{less constraining effect}$$

Overall

$$D_P B_P = \text{less constraining}$$

⁸⁶ Term is used throughout Campbell and Rockman's book when discussing the administration's foreign policy abilities and use of force.

The result of the three areas which affect both D_P and B_P was to create an overall less constraining effect on P or public opinion. Taken by itself, this would have provided the president ample space to allow his personal preferences to guide the response to the embassy bombings. A review of the presidential decision context and beliefs is required to see the full foreign policy constraint picture.

C. CLINTON ADMINISTRATION'S VIEW OF PUBLIC OPINION REGARDING EMBASSY BOMBINGS

While the public and media were caught up in the presidential scandal, the country economically was in favorable conditions. Many Americans, while turning a negative eye to Clinton's personal qualities, approved of his policies domestically. For Clinton, the year 1998 was a time of personal turmoil and professional success. Although Clinton and his advisers would state in newspaper and magazine articles that during the intervening period between the embassy bombings and U.S. response, Clinton spent the majority of his time with his advisers deciding actions and the U.S. response versus concentrating on his personal issues, the opposite may be true.

In their enduring efforts to portray Mr. Clinton as not being distracted by the Lewinsky investigation, White House officials today cast the president as overseeing the latest developments in the bombings in Africa. But they were quick to assert that he could stay in charge even while traveling because of the advanced communications systems aboard Air Force One.

Mr. Clinton suggested in Louisville that teams in Africa were successfully tracking clues to the bombings. "They are searching and finding evidence," he said. But otherwise, his public comments on the bombing were restricted to asking for a moment of silence in honor of the dead, stating the nation's resolve in the face of terrorism, and vowing to bring the "murderers" to justice.⁸⁷

Reviews of the archived statements, both written and spoken, of the president paint a contrasting picture of the importance of public opinion and his personal issues to the development of foreign policy. A review and summation of these sources will elucidate

⁸⁷ Katherine Q. Seelye, "Uneasy About Timing of Fund-Raisers, Clinton Shortens Trip," *The New York Times*, Section A, Page 15, Column 1, 11 August 1998.

the real, potentially constraining decisional context (D_E) and beliefs (B_E) of the executive within which the president was operating during the embassy bombings.

The *Public Papers of the Presidents – William J. Clinton* books one (January – June) and two (July – December) for 1998, provide every remark, news conference, statement, letter, communication and speech the president produced for calendar year 1998. Each product contains important insights into the beliefs of the president and administration and the decisional context within which they operated. Although important, all sources are not equally valuable. Significant differences were noted between news conferences, where there were question and answer sessions between the president and reporters/media sources, and remarks, letters, and statements of the president. The latter were carefully scripted while the former were impromptu statements and answers by the president and represent a more accurate and personal reference point from which to gather information about the overall beliefs of the president. For this reason, I concentrated my review on the 75 (volume one) and 48 (volume two) sources contained under the heading “Interviews with the News Media.”⁸⁸

1. Decision Context

After reviewing each of the 123 sources identified under “Interviews with the News Media,” various attributes of the decision context of the president (D_E) became clear. Appendix A contains a complete listing by volume number, date, president’s comments, context of comments, media question heading, and event title of the applicable statements by Clinton. As I reviewed this data, some common themes clearly emerged from the speeches and statements made by Clinton, and emphasis by the media on certain key items. The public opinion belief system of Clinton, which will be reviewed in the next section, is illustrated through the actual words within answers to questions the president used during the various media sessions.

The core context grouping that seems to have had significant impact upon Clinton and his decision-making ability was the scandal surrounding his inappropriate

⁸⁸ William J. Clinton, *Public Papers of the Presidents: William J. Clinton 1998, Book 1 and Book 2* (Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1999).

relationship. Although Clinton and his advisers will publicly deny the impact of the scandal, media attention and statements by Clinton point to a contrasting conclusion. Of the 30 statements made by Clinton directly discussing the public and their significance, 21 were centered on his “personal turmoil.” The statements by Clinton all share a common theme: the importance of going back and doing the work for the American people that he was hired to do. Interestingly, Clinton used this phrase only when the media confronted him about his personal problems during question and answer sessions. Clinton appeared to be talking directly to the American public, attempting to reassure them the scandal would not affect his ability to do the work he was “hired” to do. These statements reveal a contextual framework muddled by personal issues. As Clinton continually emphasized his role as a hired delegate of the people, one cannot miss the fact that the majority of question and answer sessions with the media during 1998 served a dual purpose. Primarily, these sessions allowed the media to grill the president about his personal conduct and impending/ongoing legal issues, and only secondarily to discuss pertinent world issues. From a decision context framework, the conclusion drawn would be opposite what Clinton and his advisers espoused; the scandal would have an effect on Clinton during the embassy bombings incident.

For example, on 6 February 1998, “The President’s News Conference with Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom” contained 12 media questions encompassing Clinton’s personal turmoil (personal integrity and responsibility, rightwing conspiracy, possibility of resignation, Paula Jones civil lawsuit, independent counsel’s investigation, and Monica S. Lewinsky) compared to 8 questions about foreign policy issues (situation in Iraq, U.S. aircraft accident in Italy, and UK domestic reforms).⁸⁹ The importance and coverage the media provided to the personal issues of the president would have played an increasingly constraining effect on the president by imparting a false importance to the president of the public’s perception of the scandal.

Aside from the insights garnered from the direct statements by the president about decision context, also telling are the actual exchanges with the media during the time of

⁸⁹ William J. Clinton, *Public Papers of the President: William J. Clinton, Book 1 1998* (Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1999), 184-193.

the embassy bombings and the U.S. response. While the president continued to provide vetted remarks and speeches, the number of opportunities for the press/media to ask questions with candid presidential responses dropped to *zero* between 27 July and 2 September 1998.⁹⁰ There were no news conferences immediately before, during or immediately after the periods from the embassy bombings to the U.S. response. Also, occurring within the intervening period of 8 to 19 August 1998 was Clinton's congressional testimony on 17 August where he admitted to an inappropriate relationship and lying to cover it up. Additionally, considering that Clinton averaged 9.1 Question and Answer (Q&A) sessions per month for 1998, it is uncharacteristic of the administration to have zero Q & As for the month of August.

Month	Question and Answer Sessions	Q&As with Questions about Clinton's Personal Turmoil
January	10	3
February	5	3
March	14	3
April	12	5
May	10	3
June	14	0
July	7	3
August	0	0
September	8	5
October	13	5
November	12	7
December	5	4
TOTAL	110	41

Table 8. Clinton's Media Question and Answer Sessions by Month⁹¹

Reviewing other time periods (Table 9) marked by aggression against the U.S., news conferences and question and answer sessions with the executive were the norm.

⁹⁰ Clinton, *Public Papers of the President: William J. Clinton, Book 2* 1998, 1338-1536.

⁹¹ Data compiled from Clinton, *Public Papers of the Presidents: William J. Clinton, Book 1 and 2* 1998.

Date	Crisis	Title	News Conference (Yes/No)
26 June 1993 28 June 1993	U.S. Strikes on Iraq	Address to Nation on the Strike on Iraqi Intelligence Headquarters Remarks and an Exchange with Reporters Prior to a Cabinet Meeting	Yes
26 June 1996	Khobar Towers Bombing	Remarks on the Terrorist Attack in Saudi Arabia and an Exchange with Reporters	Yes
17 December 1998	Missile Strikes on Iraq	Remarks on the Missile Strikes on Iraq and an Exchange with Reporters	Yes
12 October 2000	U.S.S. Cole Bombing	Remarks on the Attack on the U.S.S. Cole and the Situation in the Middle East	Yes

Table 9. Comparison of Crisis Periods⁹²

These sessions provided an opportunity for the executive to voice his concerns and resolve to protect the United States and punish those responsible. Why, during a month where U.S. interests were directly attacked, did Clinton hide from the world and opt for vetted statements over media question and answer sessions? Unlike the statements from Clinton, the conclusion that can be drawn is that the scandal and media emphasis placed on this event outweighed other coverage, specifically the embassy bombings. This shows the scandal affected Clinton's ability to confront other issues as illustrated by the lack of attention drawn to the embassy bombings through direct presidential/media sessions. The combination of Clinton's perception of personal issues, public and media attention, and desire to maintain a sound economy led to an increasing constraining effect. Specifically,

⁹² Data consolidated from speeches taken from Clinton, *Public Papers of the Presidents: William J. Clinton, Book 1 1993, Book 1 1996, Book 2 1998, Book III 2000/2001*.

the president felt constrained in the ability to go before the public to make the case for use of force, which in turn placed limits on the ability to choose a forceful response.

2. Beliefs

Key to the discussion of public opinion's potentially constraining effect on presidential decision-making is the review of the beliefs (B_E) held by the executive in regards to the importance of public opinion in the foreign policy arena. Foyle's two by two matrix shown in Table 1 asks two questions. Is it desirable for input from public opinion to affect foreign policy choices and is public support of a foreign policy necessary?

Before examining the case of the embassy bombings and use of force with Afghanistan, it is important to provide the baseline of Clinton's beliefs in regards to public opinion in general. In Clinton's first term Garry Wills noted, "Clinton is an omni-directional placater. He wants to satisfy everyone, which is a surefire way to satisfy no one."⁹³ Having been elected to focus on the domestic concerns of the United States, it should come as no surprise that the president's leadership style and beliefs were internally focused. The need to satisfy the American public was high on Clinton's list of priorities. Clinton remarks, "My premise was that the American people were hungry for a president who showed that he knew that something had to be done here to address our problems at home and that had been long neglected."⁹⁴ As a result, the ability to enact sound and consistent foreign policy was diminished. An assessment by Berman and Goldman concluded, "An internal focus implies that less attention need be devoted to thinking systematically about, and devising strategies to respond to, challenges that originate outside the nation, let alone to devising strategies that shape the external environment ... In this sense, the problem is that ... Clinton has chosen to follow rather than lead."⁹⁵

⁹³ Garry Wills, "Clinton's Troubles," *New York Review of Books*, 22 September 1994, 7.

⁹⁴ Ann Devroy and R. Jeffrey Smith, "Clinton Reexamines a Foreign Policy Under Siege," *Washington Post*, 17 October 1993, A1, A28.

⁹⁵ Berman and Goldman, 298.

Following rather than leading public opinion was central to Clinton's presidency and belief system. In an introspective statement about his leadership and belief style, Clinton stated, "I've got to be more like John Wayne."⁹⁶ The comparison to John Wayne as the out front, rigid and dynamic leader who sets the example for others to follow, is a direct contrast to the belief system and style of Clinton. By following the public's wishes and looking inward toward domestic issues, Clinton's foreign policy choices and efforts were impacted.

There seems to be agreement that Clinton's style is at once ad hoc and overly cautious. He relies very heavily on the advice of his foreign policy team, but also responds readily to domestic public opinion. Thus, the impression exists of a president who is unsure and inconsistent on foreign policy, and who is even conducting foreign policy with only domestic goals in mind. Clearly, Clinton aims to please.⁹⁷

To enact change based on the people's will or the concentration on public opinion prior to the formulation of U.S. foreign policy, paints the picture that input from public opinion does affect foreign policy formulation of the administration. For Foyle, this would constitute a Yes on the "Y" axis of Table 1.

Clinton's emphasis on public opinion affected not just policy formulation but also policy implementation. In 1994, Clinton observed that "any sustained endeavor involving our military forces requires the support of the people over the long run."⁹⁸ By itself, Clinton's statement provides insight into the potential constraining effects of public opinion on policy enactment. If military forces are to be used, the public needs to be behind the policy.

Clinton learned this lesson early on. The example for Somalia was used earlier to illustrate the public's decisional context. Similarly, Clinton learned of public opinion's effect when support for military forces fell after the death of 18 and wounding of 78 U.S.

⁹⁶ Elizabeth Drew, *On the Edge: The Clinton Presidency* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994), 58.

⁹⁷ Berman and Goldman, 298.

⁹⁸ William Clinton, *Public Papers of the Presidents: William J. Clinton, 1994* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1995), 1576.

service members while trying to change the internal regime of Somalia.⁹⁹ The initial position of the administration, which had garnered general support of the public, was to supply troops for the humanitarian aid of Somalis. Prior to the 3 October 1993 deaths, 46% of the public disapproved of the presence of U.S. troops in Somalia and 43% approved. The end result, as the operation turned to internal political change, was declining and failing support and public acceptance. After the deaths and wounding of U.S. service members in Somalia, public opposition moved to 69% with 43% of the public wanting the forces withdrawn immediately.¹⁰⁰ As support and public opposition turned against Clinton and the campaign, “the domestic criticism took Clinton by surprise.”¹⁰¹ Clinton remarked to his advisers, “How could this happen ... no one told me about the downside.”¹⁰² Public pressure was placed upon Congress and Clinton’s public approval ratings for how he was handling the issue plummeted, falling from 51% to 31% from June to October 1993.¹⁰³ Foyle concluded that, “Congressional reactions to the deaths in Somalia were fueled in large part by pressure from the public. Throughout the U.S. intervention in Somalia, Congress paid close attention to the polls, and congressional support for intervention dropped along with public support.”¹⁰⁴ Clinton and his advisers looked to different policy solutions within Somalia and finally decided on the eventual pullout based on timelines associated with a gradual withdrawal. Clinton’s belief system regarding the levels of support the American public would extend for casualties in regime change environments was founded in Somalia and extended to other engagements.

The shock and impact of public opinion weighed heavily on the final policy outcome of Somalia. As a result, public opinion impacted policy implementation; Foyle

⁹⁹ U.S. Congressional Research Service, “The United States and the Use of Force in the Post-Cold War World: Toward Self-Deterrence?,” by Stanley R. Sloan, Senior Specialist in International Security Policy, 20 July 1994, 11, <http://www.fas.org/man/crs/94-581s.htm> (accessed 20 May 2006).

¹⁰⁰ Andrew Kohut and Robert C. Toth, “Arms and the People,” *Foreign Affairs* 73 (1994), 52.

¹⁰¹ Foyle, 220.

¹⁰² Drew, 317, 326.

¹⁰³ Carolyn J. Logan, “US Public Opinion and the Intervention in Somalia,” *Fletcher Forum of World Affairs* 20 (1996), 155-80.

¹⁰⁴ Foyle, 221.

characterizes this as a positive effect on the x axis of his table (Table 1) and the designation of Clinton’s public opinion belief system as “delegate”.

		Is public support of a foreign policy necessary?	
		YES	NO
Is it desirable for input from public opinion to affect foreign policy choices?	YES	Delegate	Executor
	NO	Pragmatist	Guardian

Table 10. Clinton’s Public Opinion Belief Structure

Further evidence of Clinton’s delegate belief system can be found by reviewing the statements taken from his speeches and interactions with reporters in Appendix A. These direct, personal statements provide a significant window into his thoughts on his role as president. During a discussion with reporters on 11 October 1998, Clinton remarked, “They [congress] shouldn’t be worried about whether the president is here or not ... I’m worried about what they do when they are here. They kill everything that the American people want. And that’s what they’ve got to get to work on, to do the things people want done.”¹⁰⁵ Additionally during remarks and exchanges with reporters on 24 March 1998 in Africa, Clinton reemphasized his role and duty to the public, “I’m glad to be doing the business of the United States and the people ... I think most Americans want me to do the job I was elected to do. And so I’m going to try and do what most people want me to do.”¹⁰⁶ Throughout Clinton’s presidency and specifically throughout 1998, he referred to doing the people is business and being hired by the American people to do a job. Implicit within these statements is Clinton’s commitment to do the job that the

¹⁰⁵ William Clinton, *Public Papers of the Presidents: William J. Clinton, Book II 1998* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1999), 1776.

¹⁰⁶ William Clinton, *Public Papers of the Presidents: William J. Clinton, Book I 1998* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1999), 425.

American people want done. In other words, Clinton believes he is the public's delegate, hired to do what the people want.

3. Summation of President's View of Public Opinion

While the public did not exert an overly constraining effect on Clinton's decision-making ability ($D_P B_P$ = less constraining), Clinton may have imposed a more restrictive environment (decisional context and beliefs) upon himself because of the scandal. From a decisional context perspective (D_E), the uncharacteristic lack of media sessions and direct statements made by the president concerning the need to "get back to the job the public had hired him to do" provide insight into the apparent importance Clinton may have thought the scandal had for the public by virtue of the attention it received from the media. The end result would have created a more constraining decision-making environment for Clinton and limited his perceived options and made him more tentative to act.

Because the country was sound economically and domestically people were satisfied with the job Clinton was doing, one would expect a less constraining environment from which to make decisions. Because of other issues, namely his personal problems and media attention, ongoing at the same time, this proved false. The statements made by Clinton to the public during 1998 exhibit a need to communicate to the people his commitment to continue to do their bidding. Specifically, he felt the need to relay that his errors would not impact them on the domestic front. The conclusion I draw is that Clinton actually felt constrained by the good economy, to continue it, and to ensure that the one good thing he had going for him stayed sound. Clinton's career was in the hands of the people. Had the economy and domestic front of the United States been poor, the chances of Clinton being impeached were higher. As Kohut remarked in the *New York Times*,

A similar delayed effect could reverse initial opinion today with regard to Mr. Clinton. If the economy and bull market begin to sour, the public

could eventually condemn the president for a scandal that diverted Washington's attention while the nation's prosperity withered away.¹⁰⁷

Clinton in the Presidential Papers remarked on the need to:

... still keep the economy going ... and that's got to be my focus in these closing days. What happens to me I think ultimately will be for the American people to decide. I owe them my best efforts to work for them, and that's what I am going to do.¹⁰⁸

In the end, the decisional context of the scandal and good domestic conditions combined to provide for a more constraining environment for the president.

As the "ultimate example of a public presidency, one based on a perpetual campaign to obtain the support of the American people,"¹⁰⁹ the identification of Clinton's belief system (B_E) is founded on his lessons from previous incidents, his ongoing personal issues, and his role as delegate of the people. Taking a lesson from Somalia early in his career, Clinton's belief system centered on the understanding that the people would not accept casualties for certain conflicts. In fact, his response to his advisers (expressed earlier) illustrates a desire not to have backlash from the public. As a result, this belief from the lesson learned in Somalia would create a more constraining effect and limit policy options for Clinton.

As discussed in Clinton's decision context, the bombings occurred during a time of increased personal and political tension for Clinton. The scandal the president was immersed in created an atmosphere of heightened public awareness that put at risk survival in office for the president. In his book, *My Life*, as an example, the discussion into his personal beliefs of the embassy bombings and U.S. reaction was kept to five pages while being sandwiched and absorbed within the discussion of his personal problems for eight pages. His personal issues absorbed media attention and thus focus by the public and were pervasive throughout the bombing incident. As journalists noted at

¹⁰⁷ Kohut, 15.

¹⁰⁸ Clinton, *Public Papers of the Presidents: William J. Clinton, Book II 1998*, 1748.

¹⁰⁹ George C. Edwards III, "Frustration and Folly: Bill Clinton and the Public Presidency," in *The Clinton Presidency: First Appraisals*, ed. Colin Campbell and Bert A. Rockman (Chatham, NJ: Chatham House, 1996), 234.

the time, “despite polls showing a lack of public concern about the investigation, ratings still soar and the public and network appetite for commentary is surprisingly large.”¹¹⁰ Utilizing the same Lexis/Nexis search (Table 5) conducted for public opinion beliefs (B_P) in the previous section reveals a majority of articles during the time from embassy bombings to U.S. response were written about the Clinton scandal. Clinton was aware of the media’s heightened awareness and ironically the fact that he was so much in the spotlight for the scandal may have clouded his beliefs of what the public thought. As a result, Clinton’s beliefs of the situation and public opinion and his role as delegate would have created a more constraining effect on his decision-making abilities.

D_E

Clinton perception of public attention to personal issues = more constraining
 Clinton need to maintain sound U.S. economic environment = more constraining

$D_E = \text{more} + \text{more}$

$D_E = \text{more constraining}$

B_E

Clinton’s beliefs garnered from Somalia = more constraining
 Clinton’s beliefs of the importance the scandal played = more constraining
 Clinton as Delegate of the people = more constraining

$B_E = \text{more} + \text{more} + \text{more}$

$B_E = \text{more constraining}$

Overall

$D_E B_E = \text{more constraining}$

D. CLINTON ADMINISTRATION RESPONSE TO PUBLIC OPINION

Reviewing the summary data from both public and presidential beliefs (Section B and C) will reveal the need the administration felt to provide a response to public opinion, if any. Generally, if public opinion is viewed as constraining, there will arise a need, by the executive, to somehow influence or attempt to influence the public. The end goal of this influence would be to reduce the constraining or unsupportive effect of the public. The results of the previous sections show:

¹¹⁰ Jill Abramson, “The Nation: When Too Much Isn’t Enough; All Monica, All the Time: A Viewers’ Guide,” *The New York Times*, 9 August 1998, Section 4; Page 1; Column 1.

Public

$D_P = \text{less constraining effect}$

$B_P = \text{less constraining effect}$

$D_P B_P = \text{less constraining}$

Executive

$D_E = \text{more constraining}$

$B_E = \text{more constraining}$

$D_E B_E = \text{more constraining}$

Overall

$D_P B_P = \text{less constraining}$

$D_E B_E = \text{more constraining}$

Reviewing the data from previous sections, the public does not appear to have been a significant constraining factor in a direct fashion. The economy was sound and domestically the areas that the public “hired” Clinton to clean up and fix were doing well. The public, while subjected to large amounts of coverage of Clinton’s indiscretion, had placed a separation between his public and private life and continued to poll favorably for the job he was doing while in office. The one facet of the public that may have been a constraining factor was the public’s desire to use force only when necessary (opposite of Somalia), but this more constraining contextual area is neutralized by the view of the public that the embassy bombings were a threat to the United States and it was in the best interest of the United States to strike back at the perpetrators of the bombings. Overall, the public did not act to constrain Clinton and as a result one would not expect the administration to expend a lot of resources educating the public in an effort to minimize their already tacit supportive position.

The interesting aspect of this incident really lies in the inference to be made of Clinton’s own assessment of the public and the belief/decisional context he found himself in during the time of the bombings. While the public separated the job he was doing for the country and the scandal, Clinton may have believed the opposite. His role as public delegate and the lessons he learned from previous engagements of U.S. foreign policy compounded the issue. Clinton saw the need to garner public support for issues, both in formulation of ideas/policy and implementation. George Edwards adds, “Obtaining public support, then, was inevitably going to be a constant preoccupation of the Clinton administration.”¹¹¹ Clinton’s need to maintain a sound economy especially during a time

¹¹¹ Edwards, 235.

of personal turmoil, where media coverage pervaded the airways and newspapers, skewed his perception of the importance the public placed on the scandal. This created a more constraining atmosphere for Clinton, where he felt he needed to earn the people's trust back.

What I can do is to do my job for the American people. I trust the American people. They almost always get it right and have for 220 years. And I'm working in a way that I hope will restore their trust in me by working for the things that our country needs.¹¹²

In essence, Clinton felt he was beholden to the people of the United States for his job and his actions needed to be consistent with what the American people wanted in order to keep his position. Clinton's remarks to reporters reinforce this concept, "What happens to me I think ultimately will be for the American people to decide."¹¹³ In the end, it wasn't the overt actions of the public that constrained Clinton, but his beliefs and decision context.

1. What Did the Administration Do to Affect or Change Public Opinion, if Needed?

From my research into the embassy bombings and subsequent U.S. response, the Clinton administration did nothing to change the opinion of the public in order to enact its policy decision. This was a result of the various issues addressed above. First, the public's belief and decisional context lent itself to a less constraining atmosphere for the Clinton administration. Generally, the administration would need to change or educate the public when the constraining effect of the public was greater. This wasn't the case. Next, the one area that proved more constraining for the public, lessons from previous interventions was negated by the public's belief that the embassy bombings posed a threat such that the subsequent U.S. response was in the best interest of the United States. Finally, Clinton's own issues seem to have overwhelmed the public's less constraining

¹¹² Clinton, *Public Papers of the Presidents: William J. Clinton, Book 2 1998*, 1768.

¹¹³ Clinton, *Public Papers of the Presidents: William J. Clinton, Book 2 1998*, 1748.

effects and any need to enact change would come from his own beliefs and decision context.

The public opinion constraint perceived by the Clinton administration was greater and commanded more attention by Clinton. In this situation, I would expect the administration to implement programs or decisions to reverse the perceived constraining effect of the public. For the Clinton administration, education of the public through communication was the program of choice. Clinton learned in his first year as president the importance of communication. “What I’ve got to do is to spend more time communicating with the American people about what we’ve done and where we’re going.”¹¹⁴ For foreign policy, Clinton commented that one of his major changes in handling foreign policy was in explaining it to the public.¹¹⁵ In a discussion with reporters in April 1998, Clinton reaffirmed the need to educate the public to make changes and spur action, “So we have to-we really need to continue this effort we’re making this calendar year to educate the public and to get the ideas out there ... and then I think what you’ll see-is very a rapid action early next year.”¹¹⁶

As I look at the time from initial incident to U.S. response, it is interesting to note that although the public’s constraining effect was small and any response would be made through Clinton’s own perception of the need for communication, Clinton spoke to the American people only twice from 7 – 19 August 1998. Both times the medium was a Radio Address to the Nation. As shown previously, the standard for incidents and responses like this was through news conferences (Table 9) where the president could personally communicate directly to the people. Whether or not scripted communication via radio twice over a period of 12 days constitutes sufficient education or perceived education of the public by the Clinton administration is not known. My own conclusion is the Clinton administration did not feel a need to educate the public to create the final

¹¹⁴ President, White House Transcript of interview of President Clinton by WWWE Radio, Cleveland, 24 October 1994.

¹¹⁵ Dan Goodgame and Michael Duffy, “Blending Force with Diplomacy,” *Time*, 31 October 1994, 35.

¹¹⁶ Clinton, *Public Papers of the Presidents: William J. Clinton, Book 1 1998*, 634.

policy solution. The public's already less constraining attitude provided the administration the necessary room to pursue the policy of choice it felt most desirable.

Clinton's use of radio versus news conference is reflective of his beliefs and the decision context in which he found himself. While he did communicate to the public in the intervening period, he did not use the traditional means or the frequency that I would have expected that was justified by his own perception of the public. He may have ultimately been hampered by his own personal issues. Use of force in response to the embassy bombings would be a result of the less constraining public outlook and the administration's perception of the public.

E. POLICY RESPONSE TOWARDS EMBASSY BOMBINGS

In response to the embassy bombings in Africa, the United States on 20 August 1998 launched a series of tomahawk cruise missiles at locations in Afghanistan and Sudan.¹¹⁷ "U.S. officials say the six sites attacked in Afghanistan were part of a network of terrorist compounds near the Pakistani border that housed supporters of Saudi millionaire Osama bin Laden. In the Sudanese capital, Khartoum, the El Shifa Pharmaceutical Industries factory—which U.S. officials say was housing chemical weapons—was also attacked."¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ Although this thesis will review the military options, the Clinton administration also implemented an economic policy in response to the bombings. The same day as the missile strike, the President signed an executive order E.O. 13099, [63 Fed. Reg. 45167] which would freeze any assets owned by bin Laden, specific associates, their self-proclaimed Islamic Army Organization, and prohibiting U.S. individuals and firms from doing business with them. Bin Laden's network of affiliated organizations pledged retaliation; the State Department issued an overseas travel advisory warning for U.S. citizens, and security has been heightened, particularly at embassies, airports and domestic federal installations and facilities. U.S. Congressional Research Service. "Terrorism: U. S. Response to Bombings in Kenya and Tanzania: A New Policy Direction." 1 September 1998. <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB55/crs19980901.pdf> (accessed 3 June 2006).

¹¹⁸ CNN.com, "U.S. missiles pound targets in Afghanistan, Sudan," 20 August 1998, <http://www.cnn.com/US/9808/20/us.strikes.01/> (accessed 2 June 2006).

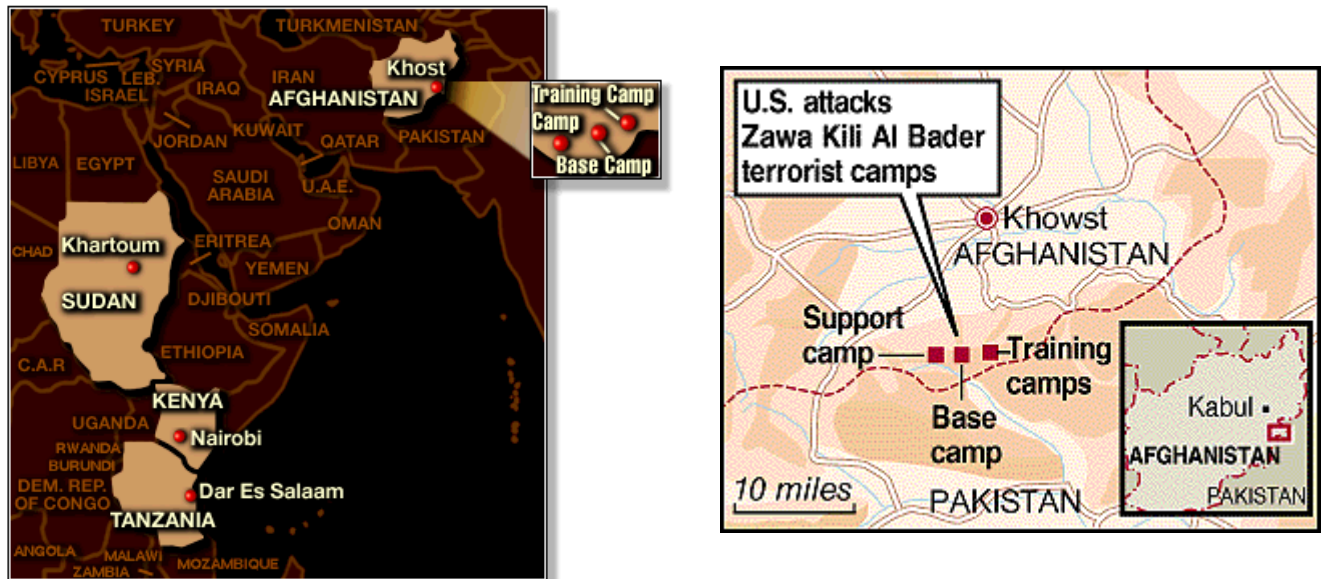


Figure 4. Clinton's Response Pictorial¹¹⁹

Justification made by Clinton during his “Address to the Nation on Military Action against Terrorist Sites in Afghanistan and Sudan” on 20 August 1998, included the following. On Afghanistan, Clinton said,

Our forces targeted one of the most active terrorist bases in the world. It contained key elements of the bin Laden network's infrastructure and has served as a training camp for literally thousands of terrorists from around the globe. We have reason to believe that a gathering of key terrorist leaders was to take place there today, thus underscoring the urgency of our actions.¹²⁰

On the Sudan site, Clinton said, “Our forces also attacked a factory in Sudan associated with the bin Laden network. The factory was involved in the production of materials for chemical weapons.”¹²¹ A counter action in response to the attacks on U.S. sovereignty is understandable and expected. The question of effectiveness is important to determine if

¹¹⁹ Picture 1 from CNN.com. “U.S. missiles pound targets in Afghanistan, Sudan.” 20 August 1998. <http://www.cnn.com/US/9808/20/us.strikes.01/> (accessed 2 June 2006). Picture 2 from Butcher, Tim, Hugh Davies, and Philip Delves Broughton. “Clinton strikes terrorist bases.” *Telegraph*. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/htmlContent.jhtml?html=/archive/1998/08/21/wemb21.html> (accessed 2 June 2006).

¹²⁰ Clinton, *Public Papers of the Presidents: William J. Clinton, Book 2* 1998, 1461.

¹²¹ Clinton, *Public Papers of the Presidents: William J. Clinton, Book 2* 1998, 1461.

the response was correct and, if not, what limited its effectiveness. This review should provide insights into any potential constraining influences on the final policy outcome.

1. Was the Policy Response Effective?

According to polls taken after the U.S. cruise missile response, the public was satisfied with the results and policy decision of the president. Most polls show at least 70% of the public approve these military strikes.

Los Angeles Times (8/22): Generally speaking, do you approve or disapprove of the decision to launch missile strikes against terrorist camps in Sudan and Afghanistan?

Approve - 75% (54% “strongly”)
Disapprove - 16% (5% “strongly”)
Don’t know - 9%

Newsweek/PSR (8/20-21): Do you support or oppose the military action the U.S. has taken against terrorist targets in Afghanistan and Sudan?

Support - 73%
Oppose - 12%
Don’t know - 15%

CBS News/NY Times (8/20): Do you approve or disapprove of the United States taking this military action (retaliating for the U.S. Embassy bombing in Africa by striking at terrorist facilities in Afghanistan/Sudan)?

Approve - 70%
Disapprove - 16%
Don’t know - 14%

Gallup/USA Today-CNN (8/20): As you may know, earlier today the United States launched military attacks against terrorist facilities in the countries of Afghanistan and Sudan. Do you approve or disapprove of those attacks?

Approve - 66%
Disapprove - 19%
No opinion - 15%¹²²

¹²² U.S. Information Agency, “Majority of Americans Support Strikes Against Terrorist Sites,” by Alvin Richman, Office of Research and Media Reaction, 25 August 1998, <http://www.usembassy-israel.org.il/publish/press/security/archive/1998/august/ds2831.htm> (accessed 5 June 2006).

With public acceptance of the strikes, a review of their effectiveness is needed.

Although initial battle assessments of the strikes showed that they had hit and destroyed their targets, the actual battle assessments of the damage and influence on their intended targets would be questioned in the days and weeks to come. As discussed earlier, Clinton had made the determination on 20 August that enough information had been obtained to link the bombings in Africa to Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda. As a result, he ordered the attack with the stated purpose of destroying terrorist leaders, their camps, and a chemical weapons facility. Eventually it would be learned that “neither Bin Ladin nor any other terrorist leaders were killed,” and “the decision to destroy the plant in Sudan became controversial. Some at the time argued that the decisions were influenced by domestic political considerations, given the controversies raging at that time.”¹²³ The physical targets were destroyed, but no terrorist leaders were killed and future evidence would call into question the validity of the claim that the factory in Sudan had a role in chemical weapons. In addition, bin Laden, the principal target and leader of the organization the United States was attempting to hurt learned a lesson from the U.S. response.

In view of these failures of the U.S. use of force, the question evolves to one of how the specific policy option of cruise missiles was chosen over that of other options and was Clinton influenced to choose the missile option by any of the beliefs and decisional context at the time. Finding an answer to this question has proven difficult. An answer can be inferred from Clinton’s past experiences with use of force where he learned the public’s uneasiness for using military members and the backlash for casualties (Somalia). He also had a track record for using cruise missiles, launching them on no less than seven occasions including the strikes discussed here (864 missiles against Iraq, Serbia, Afghanistan, and the Sudan). His heavy use of this tactic earned him the “aptly dubbed, ‘Cruise Missile President’ by the western media.”¹²⁴ The choice of cruise

¹²³ U.S. Information Agency, Staff Statement No. 6, http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/911/staff_statements/staff_statement_6.pdf#search='operation%20infinite%20reach' (accessed 8 June 2006).

¹²⁴ Andrew B. Godefroy, “Government, Society, and the Revolution in Precision Warfare,” Royal Military College of Canada, <http://www.cda-cdai.ca/symposia/2003/godefroy.htm> (accessed 6 June 2006).

missiles over U.S. troops or CIA agents may have been influenced by the situational context and beliefs of the time. Bob Woodward summarizes Clinton's foreign policy approach in times of action, "the natural pattern [during the eight years of Clinton] when challenged or attacked had been a 'reflexive pullback'—caution, safety plays, even squeamishness. The Clinton weapon of choice was the standoff cruise missile."¹²⁵ The scandal exacerbated this stance. Clinton may not have wanted a more hands-on and potentially human resource costly operation during his scandal, and would not want to jeopardize the public's support for his domestic policies. As a delegate, he would have wanted to ensure he maintained the support of the public even though the constraint from the public on his policy choice was limited.

The direct public constraining effect on Clinton during the time of the bombings and subsequent U.S. strike was minimal. Clinton, as a delegate of the people, was constrained by his perception of the public's beliefs and his own belief and decisional context. The combination of the scandal, his perceived notion of the importance it played in the eyes of the public, and his role as delegate influenced his final policy decision to use cruise missiles to limit the casualties and fallout from the public. The perceived constraining effects of the public ultimately limited the executive's decision-making ability. The deterrent nature of this phenomenon will be again illustrated in the next chapter.

¹²⁵ Bob Woodward, *Bush at War* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2002), 20.

III. PRESIDENT BUSH'S RESPONSE TO THE 11 SEPTEMBER 2001 TERRORIST ATTACKS

They had declared war on us, and I had made up my mind at that moment that we were going to war.

-- Thoughts from President Bush upon Notification of Attacks¹²⁶

President Clinton was never directly affected by the constraining influence of the public. His personal perceptions of the public and his delegate view of his role as executive combined to influence the foreign policy decisions he made in regards to the embassy bombings in Africa. This chapter will review the actions of another president during a time of conflict. Similar to Clinton, President Bush will be affected by decision context and indirectly affected by the perceptions of public opinion during a time of crisis. Interestingly, unlike Clinton those perceptions will not be the president's, but those of Bush's advisers. Public opinion perception by executive decision-makers and decision context will ultimately constrain the foreign policy choices of the president.

A. INCIDENT EXPLANATION

In November 2000, President Bush was elected to office amidst a presidential election controversy. The Bush administration had lost the popular election to Vice President Al Gore 50,456,002 to 50,999,897 votes but had won the deciding electoral vote 271 to 266. This slim margin, the narrowest in U.S. history,¹²⁷ ushered in the Republican Party and a president whose public focus may not have been as keen as Clinton's.

¹²⁶ Woodward, 15.

¹²⁷ Information concerning votes and electoral college results obtained through, Federal Election Commission, "2000 Official Presidential General Election Results," <http://www.fec.gov/pubrec/2000presgeresults.htm> (accessed 3 August 2006), of the 54 presidential elections, including 2000, the Bush/Gore election was the closest both in popular and electoral.

Running on a campaign which promised to provide better education, universal tax breaks and being “not Bill Clinton,”¹²⁸ the Bush administration enjoyed a strong confidence rating from the public during its first 100 days. As Andrew Kohut of the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press points out, “He is doing very well with the public ... the average [of the polls] is about 60 percent saying they approve of him [with 27% disapproval] -- and that’s pretty good in absolute terms—very comparable to what his father got 12 years ago, to what President Clinton got eight years ago. In fact it’s better than President Clinton got eight years ago because the disapproval ratings are lower.”¹²⁹ Bush was seen as an honest and low-maintenance leader who didn’t come with baggage already in place. The public looked to him to clean up the White House and make it respectable again after the controversy and scandal that tainted the previous eight years of the Clinton administration.¹³⁰

Analyzing the 77 polls measuring the public perception of Bush’s performance through 10 September 2001, the administration enjoyed a steady 55% or better approval rating.¹³¹ His efforts both domestically with education, social security/Medicare and tax reform and internationally where he “spurned the international effort to reduce global warming, called off talks with North Korea about its missiles, bombed Iraq, expelled 50 Russian spies”¹³² and managed a potential disaster when a U.S. spy plane was forced down in China positively affected his presidency and provided room for Bush to maneuver politically. Like Clinton, who rode on a wave of confidence and approval for his efforts domestically prior to the embassy bombings, Bush’s actions, discipline, and behavior helped foster a positive atmosphere within the country. This positive

¹²⁸ PBS.com, “A News Hour with Jim Lehrer,” 27 April 2001, http://www.pbs.org/newshour/shields&gigot/april01/sg_4-27.html (accessed 3 August 2006).

¹²⁹ PBS.com, “A News Hour with Jim Lehrer,” 27 April 2001, http://www.pbs.org/newshour/shields&gigot/april01/sg_4-27.html (accessed 3 August 2006).

¹³⁰ PBS.com, “A News Hour with Jim Lehrer,” 27 April 2001, http://www.pbs.org/newshour/shields&gigot/april01/sg_4-27.html (accessed 3 August 2006).

¹³¹ Pollingreport.com, “President Bush: Job Ratings,” <http://www.pollingreport.com/BushJob1.htm> (accessed 3 August 2006).

¹³² “Bush: The first 100 days,” 30 April 2001, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/1302232.stm> (accessed on 2 August 2006)

atmosphere created an equally favorable context from which Bush was able to make decisions.

On 11 September 2001, “an airliner traveling at hundreds of miles per hour and carrying some 10,000 gallons of jet fuel crashed into the North Tower of the World Trade Center in Lower Manhattan and a second airliner into the South Tower. Both towers collapsed less than 90 minutes later. That same morning, a third airliner slammed into the western face of the Pentagon while a fourth airliner crashed in a field in southern Pennsylvania. It had been aimed at the United States Capitol or the White House, and was forced down by heroic passengers armed with the knowledge that America was under attack.”¹³³ These terrorist attacks left “more than 2,600 people dead at the World Trade Center, 125 at the Pentagon, and 256 on the four planes. The death toll surpassed that at Pearl Harbor in December 1941.”¹³⁴ This single act by a terrorist group marked the biggest one day loss of American life in U.S. history.

Following the attack, it was learned that operatives from al Qaeda, the same terrorist organization who attacked the American embassies in Africa in 1998, were responsible. Their current base of operations was Afghanistan, a country controlled by the Taliban. While the Taliban did not financially support al Qaeda, the state did provide room for the terrorist organization to exist, train, and flourish.

The Bush administration, floating on acceptable public ratings and focused domestically and only marginally internationally, now had to react. Policy prior to 9/11 was focused on issues other than protection from non-state terrorists. As the 9/11 Commission Report reemphasized, “Terrorism was not the overriding national security concern for the U.S. government under either the Clinton or the pre-9/11 Bush administration. The policy challenges were linked to this failure of imagination. Officials in both the Clinton and Bush administrations regarded a full U.S. invasion of Afghanistan as practically inconceivable before 9/11.”¹³⁵ Faced with no direct foreign policy to implement immediately following the hostile act on U.S. territory, questions soon arose.

¹³³ U.S. Government Printing Office, “9-11 Commission Report: Executive Summary,” 9-10, <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/911/pdf/execsummary.pdf> (accessed 4 August 2006).

¹³⁴ 9-11 Report, 10.

¹³⁵ 9-11 Report, 18.

How would the new president react? What policy options would President Bush focus on and how would he use U.S. force against terrorism?

1. Intervening Period between Attacks and U.S. Response (11 September – 7 October 2001)

As the World Trade Center Towers were struck, Bush was “reading to second graders at the Emma E. Booker Elementary School in Sarasota, Florida.”¹³⁶ Anthony Card, Bush’s chief of staff, was the first to pass along the news of the terrorist attacks. As the words were related to Bush, his first thoughts were, “They had declared war on us, and I had made up my mind at that moment that we were going to war.”¹³⁷ These thoughts provide insight into the executive’s belief system and possible role he would play in his administration and the intervening period from 9/11 until the U.S. response.

Unlike Clinton or his administration, which conducted immediate polls to ascertain public opinion, Bush, without concern for public opinion at the outset of his policy decision, had determined the course of action he wanted to take in response to this crisis. He had defined the policy option, war, he wanted to pursue and made a firm decision as to the broad implication of such a policy. According to Foyle, Bush would be preliminarily classified as a “Guardian,” because public opinion plays little to no role in the formulation or implementation of policy. The executive does what he thinks is correct.

		Is public support of a foreign policy necessary?	
		YES	NO
Is it desirable for input from public opinion to affect foreign policy choices?	YES	Delegate	Executor
	NO	Pragmatist	Guardian

Table 11. Preliminary Representation of Bush’s Public Opinion Belief Structure

¹³⁶ Woodward, 15.

¹³⁷ Woodward, 15.

Reinforcing this conclusion, Bush defined his role as president as “the calcium in the backbone ... if I weaken, the whole team weakens.” The president saw himself “as an agent for change—that he must state a new strategic direction or policy with bold, clear moves. And because it would be a policy of the United States, the only superpower, the rest of world would have to move over, would adjust over time.”¹³⁸ The emphasis on bypassing public opinion, self determining what he felt was the correct course of action, and implementing change that others would eventually accept provides an initial interpretation of Bush’s belief system. His beliefs would be facilitated by the confidence and expectations the public showed both pre and post 9/11

With a pre-attack job approval rating of 55%, Bush already had room to maneuver and make changes to policy. After the attacks, according to CNN and USA Today Poll data from 11 and 14-15 September 2001, the country was even more positive about the president and his ability to handle the situation:

How confident are you in President Bush’s ability to handle this situation—are you very confident, somewhat confident, not very confident, or not confident at all?¹³⁹

Total N: 629	%	N
Very confident	44.59	280
Somewhat confident	33.15	208
Not very confident	11.06	70
Not confident at all	7.51	47
Don’t Know/Refused	3.68	23

Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president?¹⁴⁰

Total N: 1032	%	N
Approve	85.97	888
Disapprove	9.65	100
Don’t Know/Refused	4.38	45

¹³⁸ Woodward, 259, 281.

¹³⁹ Gallup Brain, “New York City and Washington D.C. Terrorist Poll,” The Gallup Organization, 11 September 2001, <http://brain.gallup.com/documents/questionnaire.aspx?STUDY=P0109034> (accessed 3 August 2006).

¹⁴⁰ Gallup Brain, “Terrorism Reaction Poll #2,” The Gallup Organization, 14-15 September 2001, <http://brain.gallup.com/documents/questionnaire.aspx?STUDY=P0109035> (accessed 3 August 2006).

The executive's approval rating remained in the 86-90% range through crisis response on 7 October 2001.¹⁴¹ As discussed in the introduction of this thesis, the 30% boost in approval rating of the president or "rally around the flag" is common during times of conflict and provides the executive the environment to implement policy without fear of initial blowback from the public.

Equally significant to the decisional context and belief system of the executive are the expectations of the public of the president in this situation. While visiting the ruins of the Twin Towers, Bush was overwhelmed by support from the populace. Statements shouted by the people such as "Whatever it takes" and "Don't let me down!"¹⁴² added to the already large space Bush was allowed to maneuver. Expectations were high and the situational context provided leeway to the extreme end of the use of force spectrum. Bush perceived that the people wanted action, hostile action, against the terrorists and those that harbored them. "I had a responsibility to show resolve. I had to show the American people the resolve of a commander in chief that was going to do whatever it took to win. No yielding. No equivocation. No, you know, lawyering this thing to death..."¹⁴³

While the elevated approval rating does initially provide the executive room to maneuver, the effect is finite. It is for this reason that Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense, wanted to press with the counterattack on al Qaeda's forces. During a war cabinet meeting for the initial run-up to the U.S. reaction, Rumsfeld noted, "The sooner they acted the more public support they would have if there's collateral damage."¹⁴⁴ Public opinion, through Rumsfeld's words, is shown to have an impact on support for policy. These words provide the first insight into the true importance of public opinion for the Bush administration. While Bush may initially be categorized as a Guardian

¹⁴¹ A review of the four polls listed in the Gallup Brain, from the period 11 September – 7 October 2001 show approval ratings of 86%, 90%, N/A, 87% respectively, <http://institution.gallup.com.libproxy.nps.navy.mil/documents/decadebreakout.aspx> (accessed 3 August 2006).

¹⁴² Woodward, 69-70.

¹⁴³ Woodward, 96.

¹⁴⁴ Woodward, 32.

through his immediate response to the attacks, the effect that public opinion had on other cabinet members may have conversely affected Bush and the policy choices for use of force the executive implemented against al Qaeda and their hosts from Afghanistan, the Taliban. The interpretation of Bush as a Guardian may be premature.

2. U.S. Response

For 25 days, from the initial statement that the country would go to war in response to the terrorist act, Bush and his war-making cabinet struggled with the proper U.S. response because there was no “off-the-shelf military operations plan.”¹⁴⁵ JCS Chair General Shelton provided three options:

1. Strike targets with cruise missiles
2. Strike targets with cruise missiles and manned bombers
3. Strike targets with cruise missiles, bombers and on the ground forces.¹⁴⁶

Fearing that the administration would be looked upon by the public as “Clintonesque”¹⁴⁷ and showing “palpable disgust at the mere mention of cruise missiles only,”¹⁴⁸ Bush and his war making cabinet debated the merits of each option and ultimately chose the third. Bush told his NSC staff on 17 September 2001, “We’ll attack with missiles, bombers, and boots on the ground. Let’s hit them hard. We want to signal this is a change from the past. We want to cause other countries like Syria and Iran to change their views. We want to hit them as soon as possible.”¹⁴⁹

With covert CIA operatives already within Afghanistan rallying the Northern Alliance, Bush and his NSC staff began the extended process of establishing basing rights in the surrounding countries to initiate operations and combat search and rescue (CSAR). Despite numerous operational problems establishing CSAR, which delayed operations for

¹⁴⁵ Woodward, 80.

¹⁴⁶ Woodward, 79-80.

¹⁴⁷ Woodward, 174.

¹⁴⁸ Woodward, 79.

¹⁴⁹ Woodward, 98.

almost two weeks, on 7 October 2001,¹⁵⁰ air and ground forces began the campaign which ultimately splintered al-Qaeda and dispersed the Taliban.

As the airliners and terrorists struck their targets, Bush developed a specific policy option without the input of public opinion. War, the use of force policy established by Bush at the outset of the incident, came to fruition, but why? Was it because Bush pushed through this option because it was the right thing to do, regardless of what the public thought or is there evidence that public opinion provided the support for the executive to make and win his air and ground force decision?

Early in this chapter, Bush was tentatively categorized as a “Guardian,” as defined by Foyle. Is this initial assessment valid? Before this assertion can be formally made, some additional concepts need to be explored: 1. what role did the public play in Bush’s decision to use option three; 2. did decisional context and public opinion create an open environment from which Bush was allowed to maneuver and select the options he felt most needed; 3. what constraining factors, if any, were presented by public opinion which may have affected the policy of force that was chosen; and 4. despite an outward appearance of being the “toxic Texan,”¹⁵¹ a guardian who makes decision based on what he feels is right despite what others think, how did public opinion play into his chosen policy with al Qaeda and the Taliban of Afghanistan?

B. PUBLIC OPINION TOWARDS TERRORIST ATTACKS

Unlike the Clinton years where public opinion regarding the embassy bombings was sparse, public opinion before and after September 11th is well documented in news releases and poll statistics. From general polls regarding the public’s view on the economy, how President Bush was performing both domestically and internationally, and who was more liked, former President Clinton, Hillary Clinton, or President Bush, poll results cover the gamut and provide a comprehensive understanding of the very accepting and open decisional context and beliefs of the public at the time of 9/11.

¹⁵⁰ Discussion of CSAR and its limiting factors starting the campaign in Afghanistan was a constant topic during Woodward’s book pages 119-195.

¹⁵¹ Woodward, 44.

1. Decision Context

The decision context (D_P) of the public after 9/11 was extremely compliant and accepting of the president's actions and initiatives. Several key areas affecting the public's environment stand-out: most notably, the new president honeymoon period, economic conditions of the country, and the shock and severity of the attack.

The presidential honeymoon period is "distinguished by high approval, low disapproval, and a relatively high no opinion register among those awaiting some evidence of presidential performance."¹⁵² While most research into the honeymoon period centers on its effect on subsequent elections and the news media's leniency on the president, a more detailed review of prior administrations offers a glimpse into its impact on decisional context in relation to the public.

Looking back through public polls from the 1945 election of President Truman to the present, each new executive enjoyed an initial period of favorable public opinion. From President Ford and Clinton, who had the smallest grace period, 4 months, due to a very poor economy and rising inflation on the previous and public backlash for Somalia on the latter to Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy who enjoyed public approval ratings above 50% for much of their tenure, every president begins his first few months with a favorable public opinion outlook.

¹⁵² Russell D. Renka, "Bill Clinton's Unfulfilled Potential," Southeast Missouri State University, 1 May 2004, <http://ustudies.semo.edu/ui320-75/course/presidents/clinton/billclinton.asp> (accessed 25 September 2006)

Executive	Year Sworn	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
GW Bush	2001	58	58	62	53	55	57
Clinton	1993	59	53	54	45	39	42
GHW Bush	1989	61	56	55	58	69	66
Reagan	1981	55	67	67	68	59	60
Carter	1977	71	70	63	66	63	62
Ford*	1974	70	66	52	47	42	37
Nixon	1969	59	60	65	60	62	63
Johnson	1963	73	77	74	77	75	75
Kennedy	1961	72	73	78	77	74	75
Eisenhower	1953	68	66	73	73	67	68
Truman	1945	52	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data

* Ford months are September, October, November, December, January, February

Table 12. Question - Do you approve or disapprove of the way XX is handling his job as president? (% Approve) ¹⁵³

What's more interesting and illustrative of the honeymoon period are elections where presidential party changes occur when the incumbent president has ending public approval ratings below 50%. Reviewing all elections from Truman through George W. Bush, this situation occurred 5 times.

Executive	Ending Public Approval %	Newly Elected Executive	Initial Public Approval %
Lyndon Johnson (D)	44%	Richard Nixon (R)	59%
*Richard Nixon (R)	24%	Gerald Ford (R)	70%
Gerald Ford (R)	37%	Jimmy Carter (D)	71%
Jimmy Carter (D)	31%	Ronald Regan (R)	55%
George H. W. Bush (R)	49%	Bill Clinton (D)	51%

*This was Republican to Republican, but the effect is still the same

Table 13. Public Approval Rating Reversals¹⁵⁴

¹⁵³ Methodology: A review of all initial monthly polls (some months have multiple polls) from the month after executive is sworn in until the December prior January change over reveals public approval, Gallup Brain, The Gallup Organization, <http://brain.gallup.com/> (accessed 5 August 2006).

¹⁵⁴ Methodology: Review the final December poll figures for the incumbent (in some cases the month is different due to impeachment-Nixon left office in Jul, Ford took office in August) and the initial February poll figures for the newly elected executive, the honeymoon period is clearly demonstrated. Gallup Brain, The Gallup Organization, <http://brain.gallup.com/> (accessed 5 August 2006).

The new president is given the benefit of the doubt or a clean slate and allowed to prove or in some cases fail in the job. As time goes by, the public, educated to his true performance, will reflect their disapproval or approval in the public opinion polls.

President Bush's initial eight months prior to 9/11 are no different. Although Clinton ended his tenure with a high job approval of 59%, the scandals that rocked his presidency created an atmosphere similar to the relief the public felt when a low approval president ended his tenure. Some 56% of survey respondents reported that they were glad the Clinton was out of the White House due to the improprieties and reduced image that he had brought to the office; in contrast, Bush was expected to lead with dignity and bring the presidency back to professionalism.¹⁵⁵ Statistics provided by a joint CNN/USA Today poll in August 2001 show a 55% job approval rating with 35% disapproving of the job the president was doing. Equally telling is the fact that 55% of those polled felt that the first six months of the president's tenure were a success, with 32% citing it as a failure.¹⁵⁶ As a result of the honeymoon period, the decision context among the public was positive for Bush regardless of the economic challenges the country was enduring.

Domestically, according to respondents of the CNN/USA Today Poll, the United States economy was turning slightly, and fears of a recession were apparent within the population as early as February 2001.¹⁵⁷ When asked by Gallup to identify the most important problem facing the country at the time, the economy ranked number one out of 62 possible choices. Interestingly, national security ranked 29th and terrorism wasn't even listed.¹⁵⁸ The economic welfare of the public was first on the minds of the people.

¹⁵⁵ Gallup Brain, "February Wave 1," The Gallup Organization, Question 30, 9-11 February 2001, <http://institution.gallup.com.libproxy.nps.navy.mil/documents/questionnaire.aspx?STUDY=P0102005> (accessed 6 August 2006).

¹⁵⁶ Gallup Brain, "August Wave 1," The Gallup Organization, Questions 1 and 10, 3-5 August 2001, <http://institution.gallup.com.libproxy.nps.navy.mil/documents/questionnaire.aspx?STUDY=P0108027> (accessed 5 August 2006).

¹⁵⁷ Gallup Brain, "February Wave 1," The Gallup Organization, 9-11 February 2001, <http://institution.gallup.com.libproxy.nps.navy.mil/documents/questionnaire.aspx?STUDY=P0102005> (accessed 6 August 2006).

¹⁵⁸ Gallup Brain, "Gallup Poll Social Series - Values and Beliefs," The Gallup Organization, Question 4, 10-14 May 2001, <http://institution.gallup.com.libproxy.nps.navy.mil/documents/questionnaire.aspx?STUDY=P0105017> (accessed 7 August 2006).

Of those polled in the 16-19 August 2001 Gallup Poll,¹⁵⁹ the general feeling was that the economic conditions in the United States were worse today but would be better off in a year (66%=better off, 31%=worse off/same). When asked about current conditions, the public's outlook soured:

How would you rate economic conditions in this country today—as excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

	%	N
Excellent	2.40	24
Good	34.36	348
Only fair	49.19	498
Poor	13.62	138

Right now, do you think that economic conditions in the country as a whole are getting better or getting worse?

	%	N
Getting better	26.89	272
Getting worse	59.43	602
Same (vol.)	10.66	108

Arguably, the decision context of the public should have been negatively tainted by the poor economic outlook of the public. Ironically, Bush's approval ratings remained above 50%. Why? The key to this question is to understand that the signals for recession started back in October 1999 when the rate of growth of the gross domestic product (GDP) of the United States fell from eight to two percent. The GDP rebounded in January 2000 but continued to fall every quarter thereafter.¹⁶⁰ The executive, through programs such as the universal tax relief and concentration on Medicare and social security, provided the public advance notice of his intentions and understanding of the state of the U.S. economy. His get-well plan was created to head off public opinion and concern over the economy. Realizing that the recession started over a year before Bush came to office and feeling only a slight tightening of the belt, the public didn't tie Bush to the problem. Additionally, the public optimistically felt the economy and their personal

¹⁵⁹ Gallup Brain, "Gallup Poll Social Series - Work and Education," The Gallup Organization, Questions 4, 5, 6, and 8, 16-19 August 2001, <http://institution.gallup.com.libproxy.nps.navy.mil/documents/questionnaire.aspx?STUDY=P0108030> (accessed 5 August 2001).

¹⁶⁰ CNN.com, "Economists call it recession," 26 November 2001, <http://money.cnn.com/2001/11/26/economy/recession/> (accessed 6 August 2006).

situation would be better off in one year. With 62% of the population optimistic on the economy,¹⁶¹ the potential constraining effect of the economy was softened. The combination of Bush inheriting the economic condition and voicing proactive programs to curb the issue helped maintain a favorable and optimistic decision context from which to make policy. This positive environment would be augmented with the attack of 9/11.

The 9/11 attacks were devastating for the United States and its citizens. Often referred to as the worst attack on U.S. soil since Pearl Harbor, the attack generated an enormous groundswell of nationalism.

Wal-Mart reported that sales of American flags increased by more than tenfold. College football teams made plans to decorate their helmets with American flag decals. At least some military recruiting stations were experiencing what one officer described as a “patriotic swell” of potential enlistees. And long lines formed at blood banks from New York to Bakersfield, a response that prompted the American Red Cross to ask would-be donors to hold off for now.¹⁶²

The public’s emotions provided the Bush administration the mandate and policy decision-making room to make foreign policy decisions. Douglas Foyle explained the true impact of the attacks when he wrote, “September 11 appears to have had the largest influence on public attitudes.”¹⁶³ The fervor encompassed every facet of American society. In various media polls, “respondents expressed by whopping margins their support for a military response. In Fulton, Mo., vengeance was a common theme in conversations: ‘Most everybody is willing to put a bullet in someone’s head once they find the person who did it.’”¹⁶⁴ The public went so far as to advocate aggressively pursuing devastating action against the entire country that may have sponsored the

¹⁶¹ Gallup Brain, “Economy and Personal Finances,” The Gallup Organization, Question #9, 6-8 April 2001, <http://institution.gallup.com.libproxy.nps.navy.mil/documents/questionnaire.aspx?STUDY=P0104014> (accessed 22 August 2006).

¹⁶² Jenifer Warren and Tom Gorman, “America: Stunned, Saddened and Now Ready for Revenge,” *Los Angeles Times*, 13 September 2001, Part A, Part 1, National Desk, 1.

¹⁶³ Douglas Foyle, “Leading the Public to War? The Influence of American Public Opinion on the Bush Administration’s Decision to Go to War in Iraq,” *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, Vol. 16, No. 3, 271, http://www2.chass.ncsu.edu/cobb/p_courses/ps498z/readings/foyle%20leading%20the%20public%20to%20war.pdf (accessed 14 November 2006).

¹⁶⁴ Warren and Gorman, 1.

terrorists. In Atlanta one grandmother's sentiment was shared by others, "I'm hoping we wipe these people out, and if we need to, wipe out the country that is hosting [them]. Just get rid of them all ... If we make a statement and bomb that country to smithereens, it might scare a lot of the other terrorists off."¹⁶⁵

Public opinion polls immediately following the attacks mirrored the statements from the general public and reinforced the open decision context. When asked in the 14-15 September 2001 CNN/USA Today Poll, 73% of the public stated the United States was at war, and 88% said the United States should take military action in retaliation to the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon. However, 73% responded with caution to how the United States should respond, stating the U.S. should take military action only against terrorist organizations responsible for the attacks, even if it takes months to clearly identify them.¹⁶⁶ Additionally, the often constraining aspect of civilian and military deaths and duration of the conflict was mitigated in the public's willingness to accept thousands of U.S. casualties in a long war.

Question 22	Long	Short	Don't Know
Do you think the war will long or short?	92%	6%	2%
Question 23	Difficult	Easy	Don't Know
Do you think the war against terrorism will be a difficult one, or a comparatively easy one?	94%	5%	1%
Question 25	Support	Oppose	Don't Know
Would you support or oppose the U.S. continuing a campaign against terrorism if you knew that 5,000 U.S. troops would be killed?	76%	16%	8%
Question 26	Support	Oppose	Don't Know
Would you support/oppose the U.S. continuing a campaign against terrorism if you knew that an additional 5,000 U.S. civilians would be killed by future terrorists?	84%	12%	4%

Table 14. Public Opinion Questions Prefacing War in Afghanistan¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁵ Warren and Gorman, 1.

¹⁶⁶ Gallup Brain, "Terrorism Reaction Poll #2," The Gallup Organization, Questions 12, 16, and 17, 14-15 September 2006, <http://institution.gallup.com.libproxy.nps.navy.mil/documents/questionnaire.aspx?STUDY=P0109035> (accessed 6 August 2006).

¹⁶⁷ Gallup Brain, "Terrorism Reaction Poll #3," The Gallup Organization, Questions 22, 23, 25, and 26, 21-22 September 2001, <http://institution.gallup.com.libproxy.nps.navy.mil/documents/questionnaire.aspx?STUDY=P0109036> (accessed 6 August 2001).

Discussing the change in casualty constraint, Douglas Foyle writes, September 11th was a “‘transitive moment’ which increased the public’s willingness to accept military casualties.”¹⁶⁸ These results remained unchanged through the 25 days it took for the United States to take action against al Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan.

The combination of a new president dealing with weak economic conditions, which were inherited and addressed directly by his programs, and the devastating nature of the terrorist attack, created a decisional context that was very low in terms of public constraint. The elevated public opinion polls, as Polsby and Mueller addressed earlier in the introduction concerning the rally around the flag effect, allowed the executive to draw the decisive decision-making capital he needed to make policy towards the incident. As with the decision making context, the beliefs of the public would be similarly affected by 9/11.

2. Beliefs

Reviewing the decisional context clearly draws light to many of the beliefs of the public (B_p). The mere fact that the public was willing to lose over 5,000 military or civilian members illustrates the severity of this attack to the public and the nation. Because al Qaeda attacked the United States on its soil and caused so much death and destruction, defeat of terrorism became a vital interest to the public. Public approval polls discussed earlier and sentiments towards direct, decisive military action validate this notion. Similar to the interpretation of Jentleson’s staircase (Figure 2), threats to vital interest and the state’s pursuit of actions securing these interests rests at the top of favorable public opinion and diminished constraint. Similarly, discussing casualty aversion and vital interests, James Klurfeld of *Newsday* writes,

The dilemma then was when to use military force when the nation’s vital interests were not at stake but there were lesser interests—humanitarian or economic, for instance—involved. Powell correctly understood that the American public was not going to accept the deaths of a large number of its young when the nation itself was not directly challenged. Nor should it.

¹⁶⁸ Foyle, *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 274.

But all that changed Sept. 11. The post-Cold War period ended that morning. It isn't that Powell's Doctrine is wrong; it is that it is irrelevant. There are very few who doubt that the nation's vital interests are at stake in the war against terrorism. In one spasm of terrible violence, approximately 6,000 people were killed ... Sept. 11 was an attack directly on the United States—on not only the nation's economic well-being (which is what Saddam Hussein threatened in the Gulf), but on its very way of life. And just as the people understood that its vital interests were not at stake before (with the exception of the Gulf), they understand they are now.¹⁶⁹

The public, recognizing the threat to the nation as a clear attack on U.S. vital interests, was willing to provide the support, confidence, and lives to the executive.

Additionally, the public provided a range of targets for the executive to attack. Reviewing the 21-22 September CNN/USA Today Poll reveals the percentage of public focus on targets and goals of U.S. action: 1. Destroying terrorist targets within Afghanistan=91%; 2. Destroying terrorist operations outside of Afghanistan=84%; 3. Capturing or killing Osama bin Laden=85%; 4. Removing the Taliban government from power within Afghanistan=68%; and 5. Removing Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq=68%.¹⁷⁰ These targets illustrate the belief structure of the public concerning responsible parties to the 9/11 attacks. Upon initial review, the public's focus on specific targets may be viewed as a constraining force for the executive. Reviewing the areas closer reveals a very broad target set allowing attacks outside Afghanistan where terrorism in general is found and to a lesser degree, open belief that Iraq is an important target. The administration would use this belief and initial public acceptance to pursue the future actions discussed in the next chapter.

With one terrible action, al Qaeda solidified the will of the American people and opened the war chest of the United States. All military options regardless of casualties or severity (aside from nuclear, chemical, and biological) were available. The public

¹⁶⁹ James Klurfeld, "The Powell Doctrine and the Reluctant Warrior," *Wire Services*, 5 October 2001, p.109, http://www.nexis.com/research/home?key=1155772795&_session=509b2dd6-2d83-11db-a602-00008a0c59ac.1.3333225595.120336.%20.0.0&_state=&wchp=dGLbVtz-zSkBl&_md5=856aedef4297e6fe06ed776737f7ed63c (accessed 7 August 06).

¹⁷⁰ Gallup Brain, "Terrorism Reaction Poll #3," The Gallup Organization, Questions 16a, 16b, 16c, 16d, and 16e, 21-22 September 2001, <http://institution.gallup.com.libproxy.nps.navy.mil/documents/questionnaire.aspx?STUDY=P0109036> (accessed 6 August 2001).

identified a target set and acceptance of risks associated with pursuit of those targets. The beliefs of the public would combine with the decision context to provide the executive all the room he would initially need to pursue the use of force.

3. Summation of Public Opinion

Reviewing the public's decision context (D_P) and belief system (B_P), several key areas present themselves as important factors when summarizing the constraining effect of public opinion during the 9/11 crisis. The public's decision context and belief system were influenced by three variables: the honeymoon period, state of the U.S. economy, and the direct impact of 9/11. First and most important was the direct impact the devastation of 9/11 brought to the public. In response to the death and destruction caused by al Qaeda and indirectly by the Taliban, the public levied their ultimate support and provided an atmosphere with little foreign policy constraint on the executive. The public's view of the attack as threat to U.S. vital interests absolved any historic constraint due to U.S. casualties, time, and target. Public opinion opened the door and provided an atmosphere of absolute acquiescence to the executive as long as force was used.

Next, although at the time of the attacks the public acknowledged the threat of recession within the United States (52% responded that the United States was currently in a recession¹⁷¹), the 2001 economic condition of the country did not provide an atmosphere of constraint for the public. Rather, the optimistic outlook of the public combined with immediate program solutions for the economy delivered by the president minimized the domestic issue. Without too much personal constraint or damage, the public felt that its economic future was bright and thus any normal constraint born through domestic pressures was mitigated.

Finally, the president, in office for only eight months of his first term, was provided the room to work and make his mark by the public. Each new president, even for just a few months, is provided the opportunity, the benefit of the doubt, by the public

¹⁷¹ Gallup Brain, "Terrorism Reaction Poll #3," The Gallup Organization, Question 5, and 16e, 21-22 September 2001, <http://institution.gallup.com.libproxy.nps.navy.mil/documents/questionnaire.aspx?STUDY=P0109036> (accessed 6 August 2001).

through strong job approval ratings to begin their tenure. This honeymoon period combined with the other two variables reduced the potential constraining quality that public opinion would provide.

$$P = D_P B_P$$

D_P

Honeymoon period = less constraining effect

Economy = less constraining effect

9/11 impact = less constraining effect

$$D_P = \text{less} + \text{less} + \text{less}$$

D_P = less constraining effect

B_P

Vital interest = less constraining effect

No aversion to casualties = less constraining effect

No aversion to conflict length = less constraining effect

Target Set = less constraining effect

$$B_P = \text{less} + \text{less} + \text{less} + \text{less}$$

B_P = less constraining effect

Overall

D_PB_P = less constraining

In essence, the public arguably gave the president a blank check allowing the executive to pursue whatever means with whatever force to secure America. In a continuum of constraint, the factors presented in both the decision context and belief sections culminated in the least constraining influence on the executive for use of force possible.

C. BUSH ADMINISTRATION'S VIEW OF PUBLIC OPINION REGARDING TERRORIST ATTACKS

Unlike Chapter II, which utilized the actual statements and speeches of President Clinton in his book, *My Life*, and the *Public Papers of the President of the United States (1992-2000)*, President George W. Bush is still in office and all notes and quotations are generally sequestered until the president leaves office and signs out the documents. As a result, it is difficult to extract the executive's actual thoughts and beliefs regarding the

public. Reports by other members of the administration, through their own accounts or through works by intermediaries and trusted individuals are required to construct the executive's understanding regarding the importance of public opinion. Through direct quotations of the president and other war cabinet members, Bob Woodward's contemporaneous notes taken during 50 National Security Council¹⁷² and other meetings illustrate how public opinion weighed on the executive and help fill the gap of information during the time between 9/11 and the U.S. response.

From the outset of his tenure, Bush held public opinion in guarded regard. While campaigning in 2000, Bush attempted to separate his decision-making from public opinion, remarking, "I don't need polls to tell me how to think. If elected president, I will not use my office to reflect public opinion."¹⁷³ A very guardian-like statement, but was he true to his word or was this statement just boisterous talk of a candidate before the true nature of the executive's job took hold? As the executive's interpretation of decision context and belief system is reviewed, the following questions will also be pondered:

- Was public opinion important or a necessary facet for foreign policy, and especially use of force, for the executive?
- If the executive acknowledged that public support is important for policy, would he still pursue his own agenda if he could not affect opinion favorably?
- Are there circumstances so extreme that any constraining effect is overridden, allowing the executive free rein on policy options?

1. Decision Context

The Bush administration's decision context (D_E) was influenced by several factors: the public's context, the role of his advisers, and crisis management. The first

¹⁷² Woodward, xi.

¹⁷³ Frank Newport, "Public Malaise, Economy, Iraq, Impeachment, Base Closings," Gallup's Editor in Chief's Pulse of the Nation, August 2005, <http://poll.gallup.com/nationsPulse/default.aspx?a=08012005> (accessed 10 August 2006).

facet needs little further explanation. Simply stated, the public's views provided a less constraining effect for the executive's decision context.

With public opinion open, the second factor, role of Bush's advisers, appears to play more to the context and decision-making of the executive and requires further discussion.

President Bush was elected to office with little foreign policy experience. His years as the governor of Texas provided ample domestic experience, but provided little to augment any broader international expertise. As Ian Urbina noted during the 2000 campaign:

Foreign policy is clearly Bush's Achilles' heel. Unlike his father, Bush is a relative neophyte who lacks the experience ... [quoting Reagan administration veteran Robert Kagan] 'His foreign policy team will be critically important to determining what his policies are. He'll have to listen a lot more to his advisers for grand thinking that Reagan did.'¹⁷⁴

To make up for this deficiency, Bush surrounded himself with experts from both academia and government. From Condoleeza Rice, Russia specialist and Stanford University Provost¹⁷⁵ and Colin Powell, prior Armed Forces Chief of Staff, to Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld, who had both served in high level positions in prior presidential administrations, Bush supplied the foreign policy experts for what he lacked.

While every president values expert advice to balance their own ideas and judgment, it is the extent to which Bush relied upon their advice that created the initial ripples of potential constraint. Bush relied on this "small circle of advisers who alone are the people whose views he respects and trusts"¹⁷⁶ almost exclusively. As he stated on September 15th at Camp David while working through the policy options to respond to the 9/11 attacks, "When they give advice, I trust their judgment."¹⁷⁷ Ron Suskind offers

¹⁷⁴ Ian Urbina, "Rogues' Gallery: Who advises Bush and Gore on the Middle East," *Middle East Report*, Fall 2000, 216.

¹⁷⁵ Paul Richter, "Rice wins backing for Senate confirmation," *Los Angeles Times*, 19 January 2005, <http://www.chicagotribune.com/business/sns-cabinet,0,5937206.story?coll=sns-business-headlines> (accessed 10 August 2006).

¹⁷⁶ Richarde A. Clarke, *Against All Enemies* (New York: Free Press, 2004), 244.

¹⁷⁷ Woodward, 74.

further insight into Bush's decision-making character and importance of this inner circle in his book *The One Percent Doctrine*.

He's not a president who sees much value in hearing from a wide array of voices--he has made that clear. His circle of truly trusted advisers is small ... But he's a very good listener and an extremely visual listener. He sizes people up swiftly and aptly, watches them carefully, and trusts his eyes. It is a gift, this nonverbal acuity, that he relies on in managing the almost overwhelming duties of the presidency ... He may not have a great deal of experience, especially in foreign affairs, before arriving in the job, but--because of his trust in these interpretive abilities--he doesn't view that as a deficit.¹⁷⁸

Bush was a president who made instinctive calls based on the advice of his select advisers. His reliance on this small group affected his policy-making process.

The normal path of vetting policy by experts in various departments was absent due to Bush's reliance on a small circle of advisers. The traditional policy process "of policy shops in various departments creating reports and then revising them as issues worked their way up from committees of assistant secretaries to deputies and finally to principals of the NSC--seemed to be viewed as more perilous than productive."¹⁷⁹ As the circle of adviser narrowed so too did the breadth of information and advice. Suskind summarizing a common complaint by Secretary of State Powell and Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage explained the detrimental nature of Bush's reliance on limited advisers, "the policy process was broken; that to not fix it would cause peril; that the president would be denied the balanced counsel he needed and deserved."¹⁸⁰ Bush's reliance on his advisers to offset his foreign policy weaknesses effectively narrowed the policy process to include the advice and words of a few chosen individuals. By not being vetted in its entirety through the experts in the committees, the policy advice presented by his "small circle" was potentially biased, including, ironically, by their interpretations of public opinion. Although Bush denied the effects of public opinion, his advisers and the policy advice they supplied were affected.

¹⁷⁸ Ron Suskind, *The One Percent Doctrine* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2006), 2.

¹⁷⁹ Suskind, 224.

¹⁸⁰ Suskind, 225.

As Bush and his cabinet were weighing the options, he began to sense the impact that public opinion could have on his advisers. One avenue of potential influence involved media coverage. Addressing the “hand-wringing” attitude he saw, Bush proclaimed, “I don’t need the editorial pages. I don’t—the hyperventilation that tends to take place over these cables, and every expert and every colonel, and all that, is just background noise.” He knew, however, that members of his war cabinet paid attention. “We’ve got these very strong people in the National Security Council who do get affected by what people say about them in the press.”¹⁸¹ Even though these comments directly concerned the press, they point to a possible vehicle for public opinion to influence policy. They show that Bush’s advisers were concerned with the administration’s domestic standing. The effect public opinion had on Bush’s advisers would play a role in his decisions on use of force.

War or the use of force was the U.S. answer to the 9/11 attacks. As the president and his advisers were considering the options, the public had provided only one real requirement: the policy option and response needed to be applied against the perpetrators of the crime (see section B for poll numbers). Ironically, although the public appeared openly less constraining, the need to satisfy the public and the perception of the future constraining effects of the public and the consequences of certain policy options seemed to create conflicting cross currents of policy between the principals. This ultimately influenced the executive’s decision-making context. An indirect feedback loop to the executive through the principals’ perception of the future public constraints was created.

The indirect influence of public opinion was first felt in administration discussions about whether to go after Iraq right away. Upon guidance from the administration,

... before the attacks, the Pentagon had been working for months on developing a military option for Iraq. Everyone at the table believed Iraqi President Saddam Hussein was a menace, a leader bent on acquiring and perhaps using weapons of mass destruction. Any serious, full-scale war against terrorism would have to make Iraq a target—eventually. Rumsfeld was raising the possibility that they could take advantage of the

¹⁸¹ Woodward, 259.

opportunity offered by the terrorist attacks to go after Saddam immediately.¹⁸²

As Rumsfeld sought to “get something going in another area, other than Afghanistan, so that success or failure and progress isn’t measured just by Afghanistan,”¹⁸³ other principals argued to keep the target set narrow. Acknowledging the need to take Hussein out at some point, Powell, Cheney, and Tenet countered to keep the strategy focused on Afghanistan. “Let’s not make the target so broad that it misses the point and fails to draw support from normal Americans. What Americans were feeling was that the country had suffered at the hands of al Qaeda.”¹⁸⁴

Each side’s recommendation took into account the public’s perception and the potential future effects that might be experienced with the choice. For Rumsfeld, the lack of actionable targets and infrastructure in Afghanistan led to the potential of a “quagmire,”¹⁸⁵ something he knew the public would not accept. Bush’s other advisers understood the importance of direct tie to the perpetrators of the crime, a tie that was supported through public polls, which advocated action only against the terrorists who conducted the attacks regardless of time it took to identify them.

Which comes closer to your view: ¹⁸⁶	%	N
The U.S. should take military action immediately against known terrorist organizations, even if it is unclear which terrorists are responsible for the attacks	26.40	119
The U.S. should take military action only against terrorist organizations responsible for the attacks, even if it takes months to clearly identify them	72.74	328
Don’t Know/Refused	0.86	4

¹⁸² Woodward, 259.

¹⁸³ Woodward, 137.

¹⁸⁴ Woodward, 48.

¹⁸⁵ Woodward, 263.

¹⁸⁶ Gallup Brain, “Terrorism Reaction Poll #2,” The Gallup Organization, Questions 17, 14-15 September 2006, <http://institution.gallup.com.libproxy.nps.navy.mil/documents/questionnaire.aspx?STUDY=P0109035> (accessed 6 August 2006).

While both Bush and Rumsfeld were focused on accomplishing the mission and attacking al Qaeda and the Taliban, an underlying influence to their decisional context was their expectations about public perceptions. Although seemingly open and acquiescent, public opinion or the thought of what the public wanted would ultimately influence the executive and principals as they chose between tactics and targets. As Powell remarked to Rumsfeld's suggestion to target other areas (Iraq), "Any action needs public support. It's not just what the international coalition supports; it's what the American people want to support. The American people want us to do something about al Qaeda."¹⁸⁷ In the end, the United States opted for a response targeted solely against al Qaeda and Taliban targets. Bush tailored his use of force policy to that desired by the public.

Finally, the decision context associated with crisis management led to specific decisions by the executive. Although the public acknowledged the need to ensure targets were accurate regardless of time frame, Bush and his principals interpreted the environment differently. Again, Rumsfeld set the stage, "The sooner we act, the more public support we would have if there's collateral damage."¹⁸⁸ The message is subtle; act now while the emotions still run high and the public will be more lenient in case there are mistakes. Concerns of public acceptance by a principal run through the choice of when to act. The need for immediate action won out.

The principals surrounding Bush self-regulated based on their perceptions of future public constraints. Public opinion, regardless of its openness, still provided a constraining effect to the decision context within which Bush found himself. Rather than directly affecting the executive, this time it was found tangentially through the advice from his principals. Although at one point Bush told his strategic advisor, Karl Rove, as Rove was attempting to explain to him the current polling information, "Don't waste my time with it. My job is not to worry about the political consequences, and I don't,"¹⁸⁹ public opinion and the will of the populace still had a constraining impact on the

¹⁸⁷ Woodward, 49.

¹⁸⁸ Woodward, 33.

¹⁸⁹ Woodward, 207.

decisions of the executive through how it affected the advice from his principals. The combination of the public's wishes as perceived by his advisers and the need to act quickly in time of a crisis led to some constraining impact on the executive's decision-making.

2. Beliefs

Unlike Clinton, Bush's belief system (B_E) is not straight forward. Through statements and documents provided to Woodward, Bush is painted as an individual who is solely interested in doing what he feels is right. As he describes the war effort, his "attitude all along was, if we have to go it alone, we'll go it alone ..." ¹⁹⁰; it all came down to what was the right thing to do. He describes himself as "not a textbook player, I'm a gut player," ¹⁹¹ a decision maker who doesn't feel the need or the desire to answer to polls. Bush is a very interesting case. On the outside it appears that his decisions, both pre and post policy formulation, are not swayed by the public. This would place Bush within the Guardian context of Foyle's two by two matrix (Table 1). Looking deeper reveals another possibility.

Inherent in the guardian is the desire to formulate and enact policy regardless of public opinion. As demonstrated at the onset of 9/11, Bush did not require public input to formulate policy. But Bush did require or at least attempt to obtain public acceptance prior to policy enactment. This counters the original premise of Bush the Guardian. Reviewing Woodward's text, a central theme runs through many of the conversations and quotations attributable to the president. Bush felt he had to "prepare the American people" ¹⁹² and "convince them that this war will be fought with many steps." ¹⁹³ Speaking in the Oval Office, Bush remarked,

I knew full well that if we could rally the American people behind a long and difficult chore, that our job would be easier. I remember presidents

¹⁹⁰ Woodward, 45.

¹⁹¹ Woodward, 343.

¹⁹² Woodward, 42, 144.

¹⁹³ Woodward, 49.

trying to wage wars that were very unpopular, and the nation split ... the job of the president is to unite the nation. That's the job of the president. And I felt like, that I had the job of making sure the American people understood. They understood the severity of the attack. But I wasn't sure if they understood how long it was going to take and what a difficult process this would be.¹⁹⁴

Through continual conversations/education with the public prior to hostilities commencing, Bush worked through the issues to gain public acceptance of the policy to be used. This facet, along with the corollary provided in the previous section on decision context and public opinion's subtle effect on Bush's principals, paint the executive as more of a Pragmatist than a Guardian. His emphasis on ensuring the public understands the policy and the desire to unite the nation suggest a need to ensure public acceptance of policy to be successful.

		Is public support of a foreign policy necessary?	
		YES	NO
Is it desirable for input from public opinion to affect foreign policy choices?	YES	Delegate	Executor
	NO	Pragmatist	Guardian

Table 15. Bush Public Opinion Belief Structure

3. Summation of President's View of Public Opinion

The public provided room for the Bush administration to maneuver and choose the most applicable policy option to address the terror attacks of 9/11. Defined earlier, the less constraining aspect of the decision context and belief system of the public ($D_P B_P$) left the executive with the positive environment to decide which use of force option was most applicable. The only requirement levied, according to Roger Ailes, former media guru for Bush's father and current head of Fox News, was for a strong response against

¹⁹⁴ Woodward, 95.

the specific threat.¹⁹⁵ This message was relayed through Karl Rove: “the American public would tolerate waiting and would be patient, but only as long as they were convinced that Bush was using the harshest measures possible. Support would dissipate if the public did not see Bush acting harshly.”¹⁹⁶

Similar to Clinton, the direct public atmosphere played a limited role while the perception of the public’s possible constraining impact affected the administration’s foreign policy and the executive’s decision context (D_E). Unlike Clinton, where the Lewinsky scandal and the public’s perception impacted directly on the executive, Bush wasn’t the primary recipient of the constraining influence. His principals, the experts with whom Bush surrounded himself to provide the foreign policy advice, were most directly impacted by the potential idea of public constraint and backlash against certain policy options. As a result, the policies advised by the principals and ultimately set forth by the executive were in line with public desires. The decision context of the executive amounted to a more constraining atmosphere, which ultimately affected policy.

Equally, the beliefs of the executive (B_E) in light of the public’s influence on policy also constrained the executive’s decision-making. The strong desire to educate the populace, coupled with the need to unite the country behind policy, illustrate an executive who values the need to have solid public understanding for policy enactment. This identifies the executive as a Pragmatist in Foyle’s presidential beliefs model. As a Pragmatist, the executive is constrained by the need to ensure public acceptance and understanding for sound policy. Policy in lieu of this support would lead to a divided country, especially in times of conflict. Bush, as described in the preceding section, stated that he considered it his job to unite the country behind its actions prior to using force. D_E and B_E combined to create a constraining effect on the decision-making ability of the executive. Like Clinton, this effect was more self imposed than externally apparent from the populace.

¹⁹⁵ Woodward, 207.

¹⁹⁶ Woodward, 207.

D_E

Public's context = less constraining

Public's perceived effect through Bush's advisers = more constraining

Perceived need to quickly act due to crisis management = more constraining

D_E = less + more + more

D_E = *more constraining*

B_E

Bush's desire to educate the people = more constraining

Bush as pragmatist = more constraining

B_E = more + more

B_E = *more constraining*

Overall

D_EB_E = more constraining

D. BUSH ADMINISTRATION RESPONSE TO PUBLIC OPINION

Reviewing the summary data from both public and presidential beliefs (Section B and C) will reveal the need the administration felt to provide a response to public opinion, if any. Generally, if public opinion is viewed as constraining, there will arise a need, by the executive, to somehow influence or attempt to influence the public. The end goal of this influence would be to reduce the constraining or unsupportive effect of the public. The results of the previous sections show:

Public

D_P = *less constraining effect*

B_P = *less constraining effect*

D_PB_P = less constraining

Executive

D_E = *more constraining*

B_E = *more constraining*

D_EB_E = more constraining

Overall

D_PB_P = less constraining

D_EB_E = more constraining

The public does not appear to have been a significant constraining factor in a direct fashion.

9/11 is a situation unlike many others. The United States was directly attacked within the continental United States by foreign terrorists bent on destroying America.

The result was a public adamant for retaliation against the perpetrators of the crime. This provided the executive with the room to pursue whatever policy choice deemed necessary as long as it hit just the attackers and those who protected the terror group. Bush and his administration couldn't help but follow through and commit the United States to action per the public's stated desire. Because the public departed from its frequent constraining effect at the outset and opened the field for the executive, the question becomes not so much how does the president respond to public opinion but how the views of the public help sway the executive's decision making and ultimate course of action. In other words, did Bush or his administration change their strategy as a result of public opinion or did he acknowledge what the public thought, attempt to educate the public and if that failed continue with what he felt was right? In this case, the combination of all the factors discussed above leads to the conclusion that the main impact of public opinion was the indirect influence on the executive's principals. A reverse feedback loop was created, which ultimately affected the decisions of the executive.

1. What Did the Administration Do to Affect or Change Public Opinion, if Needed?

Normally, when the polling or research results indicate a less constraining atmosphere on the executive, the need to affect or change public opinion by the executive should be diminished. This may be the case when both public and executive decision context and belief are less constraining, but what happens when one is more constraining? As indicated in this case and in Chapter 2, while the public was less constraining, the executive's perception of the public was more constraining. As a result of the perceived impact of the public to the executive and his principals, the need to influence the public remained a necessity. In response to any perceived constraining effect by the public and his role as Pragmatist, Bush recognized the importance of public opinion and keeping the public educated to the situation. He continually emphasized the need to communicate with the public to ensure sound policy and a united stance. Boyer emphasized this key component in his article "Parallels in Courage," when he writes, "Crisis management is a matter of legitimacy, not legality, and requires knowing whether

your policies enjoy not only popular support but also understanding. U.S. presidents must be able to tap the various currents of U.S. public opinion, to link policies to values while addressing citizens' fears, and to envision how policy proposals will be implemented.”¹⁹⁷

Throughout September and the months following the attacks of 9/11, Bush made daily public announcements and declarations to the American people regarding the war on terror and the need to punish those who committed the crimes against the United States. In the month of September (11 September-30 September), Bush spoke and made himself accessible to the news media 27 times.¹⁹⁸ The common theme for each address was the War on Terror and U.S. resolve to use force to pursue the attackers. Understanding the need to have public support for policy enactment, Bush pushed for the public's education about the situation. Unlike Clinton who was absent from the news media for much of the period between the embassy bombings and the U.S. response, Bush, as a piece of his policy enacting strategy, communicated to the American people and ensured their support.

E. POLICY RESPONSE TOWARDS TERRORIST ATTACKS

On 7 October 2001, the United States launched both a land and air war to destroy al Qaeda and Taliban targets in Afghanistan. Operation Infinite Justice, later named Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), began several weeks early with CIA and Special Forces operating within Afghanistan with Northern Alliance forces. These covert operators were there to lay the ground work with local forces for the removal of the Taliban and transfer of power within Afghanistan. As Michael O'Hanlan, Senior Fellow of Foreign Policy at the Brookings Institution, summarized,

Afghans, Americans, and coalition partners cooperated to produce a remarkable military victory in Afghanistan. The winning elements included 15,000 Northern Alliance fighters (primarily from the Tajik and Uzbek ethnic groups), 100 combat sorties a day by U.S. planes, 300–500

¹⁹⁷ Michael C. Boyer, “Parallels in Courage,” from *Cold War History*, Vol. 2, No. 3, April 2002.

¹⁹⁸ The White House, Presidential Archives for September 2001, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/> (accessed 25 September 2006).

Western special operations forces and intelligence operatives, a few thousand Western ground forces, and thousands of Pashtun soldiers in southern Afghanistan who came over to the winning side in November. Together they defeated the Taliban forces, estimated at 50,000 to 60,000 strong, as well as a few thousand al Qaeda fighters.¹⁹⁹

The coalition came together to initially punish and destroy the forces, which had brought death and destruction to the United States. O’Hanlon goes on to say that OEF was “a masterpiece of military creativity and finesse.”²⁰⁰

1. Was the Policy Response Effective?

Polls taken immediately after the U.S. response indicate beliefs that the operation was a success (90.32% approved of the military action)²⁰¹ with adequate force used and acceptance of the time that passed after 9/11.

The U.S. should have launched military action before now, the U.S. waited the right amount of time to take military action, or, the U.S. should have waited longer before taking military action; [FORM B] The U.S. should have waited longer before taking military action, the U.S. waited the right amount of time to take military action, or, the U.S. should have launched military action before now?²⁰²

	%	N
The U.S. should have launched military action before now	14.09	94
The U.S. waited the right amount of time to take military action	72.02	483
The U.S. should have waited longer before taking military action	9.23	62
Don’t know/refused	4.65	31

¹⁹⁹ Michael E. O’Hanlon, “The Flawed Masterpiece,” *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 2002), Vol. 81, #3, 47-63.

²⁰⁰ O’Hanlon, 47.

²⁰¹ Gallup Brain, “U.S. Military Strike on Afghanistan Reaction,” The Gallup Organization, Question 1, 7 October 2006, <http://institution.gallup.com.libproxy.nps.navy.mil/documents/questionnaire.aspx?STUDY=P0110038> (accessed 16 August 2006).

²⁰² Gallup Brain, “U.S. Military Strike on Afghanistan Reaction,” The Gallup Organization, Question 5, 7 October 2006, <http://institution.gallup.com.libproxy.nps.navy.mil/documents/questionnaire.aspx?STUDY=P0110038> (accessed 16 August 2006).

The Taliban were disrupted and removed from power within Afghanistan and al Qaeda bases were destroyed with its members scattered, captured, or killed. Each point was a mark for the administration as well as the public. The action, as the public wanted, was harsh and responsive to the threat. The targets were narrowly defined to those who had taken the actions against the United States on September 11th. Over time, the situation in Afghanistan has grown worse, with the Taliban staging a resurgence. With respect to the focus of the research of this thesis, however, what matters is whether public opinion hindered military effectiveness. The answer is a clear no. The initial results of the policy chosen by the executive were a success. Limiting the conflict to the Taliban and al Qaeda within Afghanistan was important to the legitimacy of the operation in the eyes of the public, and this preference did not hurt U.S. effectiveness in the war on terror.

The deck was stacked in favor of the executive in the case study of 9/11. After reviewing the decisional context and belief system of both the public and the executive, it is apparent the public had little interest in constraints and opened the door wide for the executive. Although direct constraining effects of the public are not apparent, an indirect influence existed through public constraints perceived by the principal advisers to the president. This perceived influence of the public helped constrain policy choices and ultimately decisions of action by the executive. Additionally, the pragmatist belief system of the president helped constrain his decision-making by creating an interest in ensuring public support through continued education of the public. These modest constraints had two practical effects: they ruled out the possibility of going after Iraq first and they increased the sense of urgency about beginning operations in Afghanistan as soon as possible.

IV. A STEP BACK: IRAQ AS A CORROBORATING CASE

Faced with a direct attack on U.S. interests, the cases of Clinton/Embassy Bombings and Bush/9-11 offer a unique observation. Aside from the determination that Clinton and Bush's beliefs most resemble those of Delegate and Pragmatist respectively, public opinion did not directly affect the decisions of the executive. An indirect relationship between the executive or his principals and the public was created through how they interpreted the potential reaction of the public. This interpretation led to a self regulating and thus constraining influence on foreign policy decisions of the president and an increased desire by the executive to educate and communicate to ensure proper public support for policy being enacted.

In order to validate these findings a brief look at additional foreign policy decisions made by both Clinton and Bush towards crises following those presented in the case studies is necessary. Iraq's non compliance towards UN mandates to allow weapons inspectors to audit its WMD program supplies the appropriate situation for both presidents. The specific conclusions to be validated include:

President Clinton

1. Little direct constraint from the public to influence executive decision making on foreign policy
2. President Clinton's belief structure = Delegate
3. Self-constraining perception by the executive on the impact or influence public opinion would have on certain decisions. This led to the executive feeling more constrained when it came to making specific foreign policy decisions

President Bush

1. Little direct constraint from the public to influence executive decision making on foreign policy
2. President Bush's belief structure = Pragmatist
3. Self-constraining perception by the executive and/or his principals on the impact or influence public opinion would have on certain decisions. This led to the executive feeling more constrained when it came to making specific foreign policy decisions

This chapter contains a brief introduction of the conflict situation followed by sectional breakouts for each of the three conclusions addressed above. Utilizing similar

techniques employed in Chapters 2 and 3, the foreign policy decisions made to confront Iraq's non-compliance will be explored to determine consistency in constraint.

A. PRESIDENT CLINTON AND IRAQ

For much of the 1990s, the United States and the world were preoccupied with Iraq and Saddam Hussein's suspected program to produce weapons of mass destruction. Following the Gulf War in April 1991, "the UN Special Commission (UNSCOM) [working in cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)] was established to ensure Iraq was free of weapons of mass destruction and to establish a long-term monitoring program to see it remained free of prohibited weapons."²⁰³ Over the course of 7 years (1991-1998), UNSCOM and IAEA conducted "several thousands of inspections at over 1,000 facilities."²⁰⁴ What they found was beyond their initial expectations. Iraq had a "Manhattan-Project like nuclear weapons program, which employed thousands of scientists and explored many avenues of producing weapons-grade material." Over the course of these seven years, "inspectors destroyed 38,500 munitions, 480,000 liters of chemical agents, and 1.8 million liters of precursor chemicals."²⁰⁵ On the surface, the inspections appeared to be successful. The troubling aspect that has plagued executives from the Clinton and Bush administrations stems from the 31,600 chemical munitions, 550 mustard gas bombs, and 4,000 tons of chemical that are unaccounted for²⁰⁶ and the efforts by Iraq after 1993 to impede the total destruction of their WMD program.

Consistently throughout the seven years of inspection, Iraq attempted to thwart the inspector's efforts while maintaining its nuclear and biological/chemical presence.

²⁰³ U.S. Department of State, "Timeline of Iraq: 1932-2003," http://usinfo.state.gov/mena/Archive_Index/Timeline_of_Iraq_19322003.html (accessed 25 September 2006).

²⁰⁴ U.S. Congressional Research Service, "Iraq: U.N. Inspections for Weapons of Mass Destruction," by Sharon A. Squassoni, 7 October 2003, <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/25382.pdf> (accessed 26 September 2006).

²⁰⁵ Squassoni, 7.

²⁰⁶ Squassoni, 7.

Explored in detail in the, “Comprehensive Report of the Special Advisor to the DCI on Iraq’s WMD,” Charles Duelfer, the Special Advisor to the Director of Central Intelligence, writes,

Iraq attempted to balance competing desires to appear to cooperate with the UN and have sanctions lifted, and to preserve the ability to eventually reconstitute its weapons of mass destruction. Iraqi behavior under sanctions reflects the interplay between Saddam’s perceived requirements for WMD and his confidence in the Regime’s ability to ride out inspections without full compliance, and the perceived costs and longevity of sanctions.²⁰⁷

Iraq’s duplicitous strategy, which attempted to balance both a perception of compliance while retaining their WMD capability, ultimately failed. UNSCOM and IAEA quickly saw through the façade as materials and equipment were moved in plain view of the inspectors and requested installations were barred from inspections.²⁰⁸

American inspectors quickly became targets of Iraq’s defiance. In November 1997, the situation boiled to a head as Iraq expelled U.S. members of the UNSCOM team. In January 1998, “Iraq effectively barred U.N. arms inspectors led by an American from working,”²⁰⁹ while other inspectors not affiliated with America continued their efforts. Shortly after the American-led team left Iraq, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan brokered a deal with Iraq to allow full access by UN inspectors to suspected Iraqi weapons sites. The agreement fell apart in October 1998 when Iraq abruptly halted any further cooperation with UNSCOM and “suspended all arms inspectors and monitors.”²¹⁰ Finally, in November 1998, “Iraq reneged on a promise to permit UNSCOM to resume its

²⁰⁷ Charles Duelfer, “Comprehensive Report of the Special Advisor to the DCI on Iraq’s WMD,” Vol 1, 30 September 2004, 47, http://www.foia.cia.gov/duelfer/Iraqs_WMD_Vol1.pdf (accessed 26 September 2006).

²⁰⁸ For additional information see CRS report by Squassoni and Stevens, Wall, and Dinlenc report page 11-13.

²⁰⁹ CNN.com, “Clinton: Iraq has abused its last chance,” Timeline, 16 December 1998, <http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/1998/iraq/timeline/top.exclude.html> (accessed 26 September 2006).

²¹⁰ CNN.com, “Clinton: Iraq has abused its last chance,” Timeline, 16 December 1998, <http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/1998/iraq/timeline/top.exclude.html> (accessed 26 September 2006).

inspections.”²¹¹ As a result of the continued defiance by Iraq towards the UN mandate to allow inspections of its WMD programs, President Clinton ordered the deployment of military forces for Operation DESERT FOX. On 16 December 1998, utilizing a combination of cruise missiles and bombers, “U.S. and U.K. forces engaged hundreds of Iraqi targets, in order to deprive Iraq of the capability to produce and use weapons of mass destruction and to wage further offensive military operations.”²¹²

The defiance to UN mandates by Iraq spanned seven years with little action by the international community to halt its progress. In 1998, the UN publicly condemned these “flagrant violations”²¹³ and went so far as to threaten the “severest consequences”²¹⁴ for their continued action. Action against Iraq was long overdue. Comparing the answers to the following questions to the insights garnered from the previous chapters will potentially validate the findings and lead to policy implications. Is there evidence that Clinton’s delegate belief structure influenced the foreign policy decision to use force? Was public opinion lax and relenting to decisions made by the executive? Did the executive self constrain his decisions based on perceptions of an anticipated public opinion response?

1. Little Direct Constraint from the Public

In the months preceding the U.S. strike in Iraq, the public and media were still preoccupied with the personal issues of the president. Similar to the embassy bombings, the public’s beliefs and decisional context were mired in the on goings of an issue that the public had already showed little interest in. Poll data taken during the months of September, October and November 1998 overwhelmingly provide continuous coverage of the personal saga. Of the 14 polls from Gallup, CNN and USA Today, 13 were either

²¹¹ Paul Schott Stevens, Andru E. Wall and Ata Dinlenc, “The Just Demands of Peace and Security: International Law and the Case against Iraq,” *The Federalist Society for Law and Public Policy Studies*, 10, <http://www.fed-soc.org/War%20on%20Terror/iraqfinal--web.pdf> (accessed 25 September 2006).

²¹² Stevens, Wall, and Dinlenc, 10.

²¹³ U.S. Department of State, “Security Council Resolution 1205,” 5 November 1998, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/18091.pdf> (accessed 21 September 2006).

²¹⁴ CBS News.com, “UN Endorses Iraq Resolution,” <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/1998/03/02/world/main4016.shtml> (accessed 21 September 2006).

entirely devoted to questions regarding the December impeachment hearings and Clinton's issues or partially exploratory in this subject. Only the mid-November poll contained questions regarding Iraq and the progressing tensions and possible action facing the United States in regards to Iraq's defiance of the UN.²¹⁵

Similar to the embassy bombings, the public was satisfied with the state of the U.S. economy and their lives as a result. In November 1998, with 66% approving of the job Clinton was doing as president and 66% voting against impeachment, the public expressed its support of the president despite his personal shortcomings.²¹⁶ Although the media was still focused on the sensationalism of the president's personal situation, the public's concern and constraint was minimized by the sound economy and separation made between public and private life. As a result, similar to the Clinton's case study chapter, the public offered little initial constraint towards action in the Iraq crisis.

November polls also provided further insight into the limited public constraint. As the only poll in the country for the three months preceding the U.S. response in Iraq, the public's opinion illustrated an open constraint context for the executive. When asked whether the United States should continue to pursue diplomacy and sanctions or use military force to pressure Iraq to comply with the U.N., public opinion stood firmly with the military option.

As you may know, United Nation's inspectors have been in Iraq to investigate that country's weapons producing capacity. Iraq has announced that it would NOT allow these investigations to continue at certain sites. Which would you prefer the United States do right now to resolve the current situation involving Iraq:

Continue to use diplomacy and sanctions to pressure Iraq into complying with the United Nation's inspections; or take military action, along with other countries, to force Iraq into complying with United Nation's inspections

²¹⁵ Poll data analysis taken from the Gallup Decade Breakout located at Gallup Brain, The Gallup Organization, <http://institution.gallup.com.libproxy.nps.navy.mil/documents/decadebreakout1990.aspx> (accessed 23 September 2006).

²¹⁶ Gallup Brain, "November Wave 1," The Gallup Organization, Questions 1 and 4, 13-15 November 1998, <http://institution.gallup.com.libproxy.nps.navy.mil/documents/questionnaire.aspx?STUDY=P9811043> (accessed 26 September 2006).

	%	N
Continue to use diplomacy and sanctions to pressure Iraq into compliance with the United Nation's inspections	35.61	191
Take military action, along with other countries, to force Iraq into complying ²¹⁷	60.36	324

As 60% of those responding indicated a desire for military action with other countries, the Clinton administration was provided insight into the expectations of the public. Interestingly, when poll questions removed the mention of “along with other countries,” public support dropped to 52% for military operations by the United States alone with 42% in support of further sanctions and diplomacy.²¹⁸ Despite the wording, the message remained clear and unconstraining; the majority of the public supported a military confrontation with Iraq to force it to comply with UN inspectors.

As the executive weighed the overall U.S. response, the public provided additional information about certain options that might be involved in a U.S. military response. When polled about previous U.S. responses to aggression and crises that the administration had pursued, the public was asked about the effectiveness of U.S. missile (tomahawk) attacks. In response, 66% stated that such tactics failed to achieve the desired goals with 30% opined that missile attacks made significant achievements.²¹⁹ Clearly, the sole use of cruise missiles by the executive was an option that the public frowned upon. Use of ground troops was an additional negative for the public. In a February 1998 Time/Yankelovich poll, the public was split 46% in favor and 44% opposed to using ground troops to attack sites which Iraq may have used to develop

²¹⁷ Gallup Brain, “November Wave 1,” The Gallup Organization, Question 20, 13-15 November 1998, <http://institution.gallup.com.libproxy.nps.navy.mil/documents/questionnaire.aspx?STUDY=P9811043> (accessed 26 September 2006).

²¹⁸ Gallup Brain, “November Wave 1,” The Gallup Organization, Question 21, 13-15 November 1998, <http://institution.gallup.com.libproxy.nps.navy.mil/documents/questionnaire.aspx?STUDY=P9811043> (accessed 26 September 2006).

²¹⁹ Gallup Brain, “November Wave 1,” The Gallup Organization, Question 23, 13-15 November 1998, <http://institution.gallup.com.libproxy.nps.navy.mil/documents/questionnaire.aspx?STUDY=P9811043> (accessed 26 September 2006).

weapons of mass destruction. Not surprisingly, the public favored by two thirds an air strike option combining aircraft and missiles.²²⁰

Additionally, when asked the goal of a United States attack on Iraq, the public voted 70% to 25% in favor of removing Saddam Hussein from power versus the assumed objective of pressuring Iraq to comply with UN inspectors.²²¹ From poll data, the executive response, if public opinion was taken into account, would entail a combined military operation where weaponry not exclusive to cruise missiles was used to target Saddam Hussein. While targeting Saddam Hussein did not become a military objective, the use of force other than cruise missiles was embraced by the Clinton administration.

As the November poll was conducted and the February 1998 poll was reviewed, Clinton and his administration had ample time to consider their relevance prior to launching any U.S. response. With little constraint on the economic and private fronts, a solid expectation by the public for military action was formed. Expressing broad support for military action, the public moved its opinion to the less constraining end of the foreign policy spectrum where diplomacy and sanctions could give way to force. Although public opinion was less constraining on the big picture policy response, it did insert itself marginally in the tactical expectations of the executive decision. With an open policy spectrum and little constraint other than tactical force expectations by the public, would Clinton be true to his “delegate” categorization and follow the expectations of the people in terms of tactics in the U.S. response?

2. President Clinton’s Belief Structure = Delegate

Clinton’s belief structure was previously defined as Delegate. As a result, public opinion is considered important for both policy formulation and successful implementation. With public opinion allowing room to maneuver, but expecting some form of military air strike in response to Iraq’s defiance, Clinton’s choice of foreign policy options is telling.

²²⁰ U.S. Information Agency. “Opinion Analysis: U.S. Public Views Military Strikes Against Iraq.” 11 February 1998. <http://www.fas.org/news/iraq/1998/02/11/opinion.htm> (accessed 26 September 2006).

²²¹ Gallup Brain, “November Wave 1 Poll,” Questions 23, 24.

Throughout November 1998, Clinton stressed to the American public that “all the options are on the table”²²² when confronting Iraq. As the president indicated his desire to work through the situation diplomatically, he also acknowledged the possible need for military force. Addressing the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Pentagon staff, Clinton remarked, “And if we can find a diplomatic way to do what has to be done, to do what he promised to do at the end of the Gulf War, to do what should have been done within 15 days of the agreement at the end of the Gulf War, if we can find a diplomatic way to do that, that is by far our preference.”²²³ From continued diplomacy to military air strikes, the administration worked each option to determine the viability with the American public. Howard Kurtz noted the importance of public opinion and consensus of action in the Clinton administration when he wrote, “All modern presidents took polls, but in the Clinton administration they were virtually a religion.”²²⁴ “When Clinton went before the press to argue this or that position, he was, in most cases, leading where he knew the public would follow.”²²⁵

As Clinton married various attributes of airpower to reflect public expectations, his decision not to pursue Saddam Hussein is extremely telling. With a 70% mandate by the public to topple Hussein as part of the operation, Clinton’s decision to ignore this option superficially goes against his Delegate belief system, or does it? From past military confrontations, as discussed in Chapter II, Clinton learned that the public was risk averse when it came to casualties. The backlash he received in Somalia for the 19 U.S. casualties created a limiting precedent for future action. Several statements by prominent members of Clinton’s inner circle explain the executive’s decision, which ultimately mirrors his Delegate beliefs. In an interview with Nathan Guttman of the *Ha’aretz Daily*, former Secretary of Defense William Cohen remarked, “... the Clinton

²²² U.S. Information Agency, “Berger to Consult US Allies in Europe on Iraq,” by Wendy S. Ross, USIA White House Correspondent, 5 November 1998, http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/news/iraq/1998/98110503_nlt.html (accessed 27 September 2006).

²²³ William Clinton, *Public Papers of the Presidents: William J. Clinton, Book I 1998* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1998), 231.

²²⁴ Howard Kurtz, *Spin Cycle: Inside the Clinton Propaganda Machine* (New York: The Free Press, 1998), 203.

²²⁵ Kurtz, 204.

administration felt that its hands were tied in dealing with Iraq. To stop Saddam, we would have had to call up forces like we have today. Would this have been politically possible? Would we have been able to have called up 150,000 soldiers on the ground? Would the American public have supported this? The answer is apparently not.”²²⁶ Additionally, at the National Press Club, Sandy Berger, Clinton’s National Security Advisor, ruled out the use of ground troops to dislodge Saddam from power due to public constraints when he remarked, “that it would require the commitment of hundreds of thousands of U.S. troops. I do not believe that the costs of such a campaign would be sustainable at home or abroad ... the reward of success would be an American military occupation of Iraq that could last years.”²²⁷ Although the public expressed the desire to topple Hussein’s regime, Clinton, learning from the past a public opinion constraint with respect to casualties, associated the removal of the dictator with use of ground forces and casualties. As a result, Clinton, backed by his education of public aversion to casualties and the previously addressed split in public opinion on the use of ground troops, opted for an airpower policy.

Understanding the public’s desire and expectations, the Clinton administration chose options that mirrored public opinion. As one of the two necessary conditions in a Delegate belief system, input by the public was received through public opinion polls in November 1998 and earlier in February. Aside from the expressed desire to target Hussein, the U.S. response on 16 December fell directly in line with public expectations.

Seeking public acceptance and understanding of his decision, Clinton launched an explanatory media campaign outlining all steps he made coming to the decision to use military force. On 16 December 1998, in his “Address to the Nation Announcing Military Strikes on Iraq,” Clinton explained “why I have decided, with the unanimous recommendation of my national security team, to use force in Iraq; why we have acted now; and what we aim to accomplish.”²²⁸ The education continued as he spoke with

²²⁶ Nathan Guttman, “Too bad we didn’t liquidate Saddam in 1998,” *Ha’aretz Daily*, 9 February 2003, <http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/news/839010/posts> (accessed 27 September 2006).

²²⁷ Sandy Berger, “Change Will Come to Iraq,” National Security Advisor, National Press Club, 23 December 1998, <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/berger2.htm> (accessed 14 November 2006).

²²⁸ William Clinton, *Public Papers of the Presidents: William J. Clinton, Book II 1998* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1998), 2182.

reporters on 17 December, sent letters to congressional leaders on 18 December, addressed Arab Nations on 19 December and addressed the nation through the President's Radio Address and special report on television also on 19 December 1998.²²⁹ Despite public opinion polled earlier in November already in favor of military strikes, Clinton educated the public to support his decisions. With all options on the table, the decision to use air strikes as a specific policy decision by the executive circumstantially validated the initial requirement of the Delegate belief system while the education process used to validate the decision illustrated the second criteria. Clinton as Delegate was again illustrated.

3. Self-constraining Perception by the Executive

Unlike the embassy bombings where the act against the United States was unexpected, the situation in Iraq unfolded over many years. The public and executive had the opportunity to watch it develop from the initial UN mandate to the see-saw compliance efforts of the Iraqi government. The education of the public was cumulative over many years and the experience gained through countless media stories and separate actions taken by the United States and its partners allowed for increased understanding by the populace of the situation.

The executive was also allowed foresight into public understanding. Although there was only one poll taken in the three months prior to the U.S. action against Iraq in December, polls were conducted during previous times Iraq reneged on the UN mandate (February 1998) or when U.S. action against Iraq was required.²³⁰ In all, since 1993, the public and executive were drawn into and lived through the Iraq situation on a continual basis. This resulted in a situation in which public opinion had solidified and was well known.

²²⁹ Information taken from a review of the correspondence Clinton had 17-19 December 1998, located in William Clinton, *Public Papers of the Presidents: William J. Clinton, Book II 1998* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1998), 2182.

²³⁰ For a complete timeline of actions taken by the UN, the US and Iraq see: Center for Nonproliferation Studies, Monterey Institute of International Studies, Iraq Special Collection, "Chronology of UN inspections: Derived from an October 1998 UNSCOM document," http://cns.miiis.edu/research/iraq/uns_chro.htm (accessed 1 October 2006).

Because the public was educated and their opinions were sought prior to action taken by the executive, a clear distinction is drawn for the case of Iraq. The difference between crisis and premeditated policy implementation is significantly affected by the ability of the public to learn of the issues ahead of the formal action. The ability of the executive to take the pulse of U.S. public opinion prior to policy formation or implementation helps to preclude any self-constraining perception of the public's constraint on the executive. Unlike the embassy bombings where self constraint marked the majority of decisions by the executive, self constraint by the executive as a result of a perception of public opinion not reflected in the poll data is absent.

The variables are similar, less constraining public and Delegate belief system of the executive, but the increased constraint placed on the executive by himself or his principals was not present. Through poll data and past practices, the executive was educated on the desires and expectations of the public. The administration knew that the public would support the use of force but that casualty aversion precluded the use of ground troops. The Delegate executive knows what the public expects and has time to judge the response most inclined to ensnare the support of the populace versus acting only upon internal guesses about public opinion during a crisis situation. In the end, self constraint by the decision-maker is not validated in this case.

4. Summary of Findings

While validation can be made of the first two conclusions as they exist within the Clinton/embassy bombings and Clinton/Iraq WMD examples, the third conclusion can not be validated. A distinction is drawn in the circumstances that surrounded the embassy bombings versus the Iraq WMD strikes. There is a relationship between beliefs of the president, decisional context (presidential support, economy, and others factors), and the exercising of self constraint based on perceptions of public impact on foreign policy. During a crisis, as illustrated by the embassy bombings, time to educate and analyze public acknowledgement of the solutions to the conflict is limited. As a result, the executive will incur self constraints based on assumptions of public constraint. The case of Iraq and WMD showed a different pattern. As time and education allow public

interaction and opinion to be expressed, decisions are constrained based on direct and not simply inferred limits imposed by the public. If the executive is prone to look for public insight prior to policy creation and there is no information indicating constraint or limits by the public, the executive will set internal constraints based on perceived public reaction. Constraint is created in either situation. The distinction between sudden crisis actions and deliberate policy where time is available will move the constraint to either limits imposed by the public or self constraint by the executive. For Clinton and Iraq the constraints were created not by the self perception of the executive, but by the expectations set by a populace educated and expressive over time.

B. PRESIDENT BUSH AND IRAQ

Following U.S. efforts after 9/11 to destroy the Taliban and al Qaeda operations in Afghanistan, the Bush administration turned its sights to Iraq. Initially, the administration focused its attention on possible ties between al Qaeda and Iraq. Amy Gershkoff and Shana Kushner write:

[The] Bush administration successfully convinced them [American public] that a link existed between Saddam Hussein and terrorism generally, and between Saddam Hussein and al Qaeda specifically. Framing the war on Iraq in this way connected it intimately with 9/11, leading to levels of support for this war that stretched nearly as high as the levels of support for the war in Afghanistan.²³¹

Speaking to the nation on 28 January 2003, President Bush also linked the organizations: “Evidence from intelligence sources, secret communications, and statements by people now in custody reveal that Saddam Hussein aids and protects terrorists, including members of al Qaeda. Secretly, and without fingerprints, he could provide one of his hidden weapons to terrorists, or help them develop their own.”²³² Despite a 2001 report

²³¹ Amy Gershkoff and Shana Kushner, “Shaping Public Opinion: The 9/11-Iraq Connection in the Bush Administration’s Rhetoric,” *Perspectives on Politics*, Cambridge University, Vol. 3, No. 3, September 2005, http://www2.chass.ncsu.edu/cobb/p_courses/ps498z/readings/gershkoff%20shaping%20public%20opinion.pdf (accessed 14 November 2006).

²³² The White House, “State of the Union Address,” 28 January 2003, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030128-19.html> (accessed 1 October 2003).

by CIA Deputy Director, John McLaughlin which stated, “We have no evidence of any active Iraqi terrorist threat against the United States,”²³³ the administration pursued the terrorism angle and augmented it with an education campaign by Bush and his advisers to show continued WMD production by Iraq. Douglas Foyle theorizes, “With the main fighting in Afghanistan completed, the administration shifted its approach. It attempted to persuade public opinion to support the use of force in Iraq, principally by using references to weapons of mass destruction to prime public opinion.”²³⁴ In the same State of the Union speech where Bush linked Iraq with support of terrorism, he pushed his agenda further and urged action against Iraq to stop its pursuit of WMD:

The world has waited 12 years for Iraq to disarm. America will not accept a serious and mounting threat to our country, and our friends and our allies. The United States will ask the U.N. Security Council to convene on February the 5th to consider the facts of Iraq’s ongoing defiance of the world. Secretary of State Powell will present information and intelligence about Iraq’s legal—Iraq’s illegal weapons programs, its attempt to hide those weapons from inspectors, and its links to terrorist groups.²³⁵

Having decided on the policy for Iraq, the Bush administration pursued an overt effort to educate U.S. and world public opinion. Richard Haass, the Director of Policy Planning at the State Department, observed in Nicholas Lemann’s article for *The New Yorker*, “I don’t think the American public needs alot of persuading about the evil of Saddam Hussein ... Also, I’d fully expect the President and his chief lieutenants to make the case. Public opinion can be changed.”²³⁶ As a result in fall 2002, “the administration embarked on an integrated public relations effort to bring on board the American public, the United Nations, and congress.”²³⁷

²³³ Richard A. Clarke, *Against All Enemies* (New York: Free Press, 2004), 231

²³⁴ Foyle, *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 269.

²³⁵ The White House, “State of the Union Address,” 28 January 2003, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030128-19.html> (accessed 1 October 2003).

²³⁶ Nicholas Lemann, “The Next World Order: The Bush Administration May have a Brand-new Doctrine of Power,” *The New Yorker*, 1 April 2002, http://www.newyorker.com/fact/content/articles/020401fa_FACT1?020401fa_FACT1 (accessed 15 November 2006).

²³⁷ Foyle, *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 280.

The circumstances and initial entrance of the United States into Iraq offer an opportunity to review past findings of public opinion and its effect on the executive. Similar to Clinton and Iraq, Bush's decisions and actions during the initial stages of the conflict will be evaluated against the findings of the two major case studies presented in Chapters 2 and 3. The ultimate answer sought is simple. What if any effect did public opinion have on the Bush decision to pursue a use of force policy within Iraq?

1. Little Direct Constraint from the Public

As the Bush administration made the initial policy decisions to attack Iraq in response to its flaunting of U.N. mandates and sketchy link to terrorism, general public opinion provided moderate constraint. According to poll data taken 20-24 January 2003, prior to the President's State of the Union address on 28 January,

When specifics of the Iraq situation are mentioned, public doubts about administration policy really come to the fore. By about two to one in the NBC poll, the public favors giving weapons inspectors more time, rather than taking immediate military action. Also by two to one (63 percent to 29 percent), the public believes we should take military action only with the support of the UN, rather than act without that support (that's up from a margin of 55 percent to 35 percent in December). By margins of about fifty points, they think the Bush needs to produce more evidence about Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, both for our allies and for the American public, before launching military action.²³⁸

Unlike the U.S. response to 9/11, the public in the pre-conflict stages to Iraq had time to digest the situation. "Both the Congress and the public wanted to know why Iraq had to be confronted and why the old policy of containing Saddam could not be continued."²³⁹ Iraq was not a crisis situation where immediate reactive policy needed to be enacted and pursued. As a result, immediate acceptance of executive policy did not occur. Public opinion, lacking clear knowledge over why force was required in Iraq and how it fit into the use of force policy used in Afghanistan, created a constraint on the executive.

²³⁸ Ruy Teixeira, "Public Opinion Watch Week of January 20–24, 2003," The Century Foundation, [http://www.tcf.org/Publications/POW/January20-24\(2003\).pdf#search='January%202003%20CBS%20poll'](http://www.tcf.org/Publications/POW/January20-24(2003).pdf#search='January%202003%20CBS%20poll') (accessed 1 October 2006).

²³⁹ Foyle, *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 280.

Reviewing Klarevas' hypothesis discussed in the introduction, there was not a clear understanding and linkage to vital national interest or foreign policy restraint nor was there a consensus that this action would be a multilateral operation. The uncertainty of the public pre-war is further explained by reviewing Daniel Yankelovich's "The Rules of Public Engagement." According to Yankelovich, before fully committing to any action, the public follows a seven step process:

1. Awareness of problem
2. Urgency
3. First response
4. Resistance
5. Choice work
6. Initial acceptance
7. Full commitment.²⁴⁰

This cycle and more specifically where the public is at in the cycle is important to understand how to direct the public to a given course of action or decision. Stages 1 through 7 were covered quickly by the public in the case use of force in Afghanistan. The public clearly saw the need to react after 9/11 and sped through these 7 steps to full commitment. In the case of pre-war Iraq, the public was between stages 4 and 5. When the administration pursued further action and started making the case for an Iraq operation, public opinion and acceptance was resistant due to lack of knowledge or understanding concerning the reasons for the policy. The uncertainty resulted in the poor polls and more importantly a recipe of expectations from which the administration needed to work.

The Bush administration reacted to this recipe and supplied the public with more information about WMD and pursued its policy agenda with the UN to garner support. In

²⁴⁰ Daniel Yankelovich and John Immerwahr, "The Rules of Public Engagement," *Beyond the Beltway* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1994), 50.

the end, the constraints or limitations imposed by the public necessitated the increased media and education campaign the administration pursued.

In developing a plan to raise public opinion to counter the low percentage of support, the Bush administration followed Yankelovich's three rules for overcoming resistance. They allocated time and attention to countering the resistance, brought the conflict into the open, and created conditions for public resolution.²⁴¹ The public was given a vital national interest focus and reason to use force as a foreign policy restraint when weapons of mass destruction and terrorism were tied to the Iraqi regime in various speeches. The President's Address to the Nation on 17 March 2003, on the eve of the war, again summarized these themes:

Intelligence gathered by this and other governments leaves no doubt that the Iraq regime continues to possess and conceal some of the most lethal weapons ever devised. This regime has already used weapons of mass destruction against Iraq's neighbors and against Iraq's people ... The regime has a history of reckless aggression in the Middle East. It has a deep hatred of America and our friends. And it has aided, trained and harbored terrorists, including operatives of al Qaeda.²⁴²

The administration made these arguments not only to the U.S. public, but also to the world as indicated by Secretary Powell's speech before the UN:

Iraq's behavior shows that Saddam Hussein and his regime are concealing their efforts to produce more weapons of mass destruction ... Terrorism has been a tool used by Saddam for decades. Saddam was a supporter of terrorism long before these terrorist networks had a name, and this support continues. The nexus of poisons and terror is new. The nexus of Iraq and terror is old. The combination is lethal.²⁴³

With 49 countries committed to the coalition,²⁴⁴ each of the three aspects of Klarevas' hypothesis was answered. Iraq was tied to U.S. national interests in an operation to

²⁴¹ Yankelovich, 63.

²⁴² The White House, "President Says Saddam Hussein Must Leave Iraq Within 48 Hours," 17 March 2003, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/03/20030317-7.html> (accessed 1 October 2006).

²⁴³ U.S. Department of State, "Remarks to the United Nations Security Council," 5 February 2003, <http://www.state.gov/secretary/former/powell/remarks/2003/17300.htm> (accessed 1 October 2006).

²⁴⁴ The White House, "Who are the current coalition members?" 27 March 2003, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/iraq/news/20030327-10.html> (accessed 1 October 2006).

produce foreign restraint using a multinational force. As a result, public opinion for U.S. use of force in Iraq rose to 77% between January and March 2003 from the low point of 31%.²⁴⁵ Strengthening the public's acceptance and reducing the constraints for use of force within Iraq was the main purpose of both speeches. While the constraint placed upon the executive's initial decision was high from the public due to a broader time scope from which the public was able to monitor the policy, by reviewing polls and adjusting an education program public constraint was reduced paving the way for policy implementation.

2. President Bush's Belief Structure = Pragmatist

As a Pragmatist, Bush needed public support for policy implementation. The administration's policy of invading Iraq was decided early on without public input. In the book, *Price of Loyalty*, by Ron Suskind, newly appointed Secretary of Treasury Paul O'Neill commented on the premature focus on Iraq by the Bush administration and specifically the Secretary of Defense. "From the start, we were building the case against Hussein and looking at how we could take him out and change Iraq into a new country. And, if we did that, it would solve everything. It was all about finding a way to do it. That was the tone of it."²⁴⁶ As Bush listened to the advice pushed by his NSC advisers, he adopted the attack mindset. "Fine. Go find me a way to do this"²⁴⁷ would be the Bush policy effort to handle Iraq, but not initially understood by the public.

As Bush listened to his advisers, he set his mind to pursue actions against Iraq. As the Pragmatist, he satisfied one end of the beliefs matrix: his policy decision was made in a public opinion void. Despite formulating policy without direct input from the public, Bush recognized the need for public support for policy implementation. Douglas Foyle elaborates, "Despite President George W. Bush's oft-repeated claim that he makes policy 'based upon principle and not on polls and focus groups,' the administration

²⁴⁵ Information taken from a review of public polls taken from Gallup Brain from January through March 2003, <http://institution.gallup.com.libproxy.nps.navy.mil/documents/decadebreakout.aspx> (accessed on 1 October 2006).

²⁴⁶ Ron Suskind, *The Price of Loyalty* (New York: Simon and Schuster), 2004, 86.

²⁴⁷ Suskind, 86.

focused closely on public opinion throughout the period [time prior to policy implementation].”²⁴⁸ In sum, support to actually adopt Bush’s policy of aggression against Iraq was needed to overcome the initial reluctance of the public. This one aspect would initially constrain the efforts of the Bush administration.

To reverse the constraint, the administration adopted an agenda focused on multiple educational processes. Direct discussions with the public via State of the Union addresses and UN testimonies by Powell responses in part to poll figures explaining the limitations the public had with a military confrontation with Iraq. While there is no direct evidence or testimony by the principals explaining the rationale of their education outlets, inference can be made when considering polls in mid January and subsequent discussions and efforts made by the executive which mirrored the expectations of the public.

During the months of September 2002 through February 2003 (just before Operation Iraqi Freedom commenced), Bush took every chance he had to discuss Iraq and further his policy of actions.

MONTH	TOTAL SPEAKING ENGANAGEMENTS	SPEECHES WHERE IRAQ SITUATION WAS TOPIC
September 2002	50	35
October 2002	51	39
November 2002	48	31
December 2002	25	11
January 2003	30	13
February 2003	32	20

Table 16. Bush Speaking Topics (September 2002 through February 2003) ²⁴⁹

It did not matter if Bush was speaking at an elementary school discussing American History and Civics, discussing education in Rochester, Minnesota, or stumping for Republican senate candidates, Iraq and Saddam Hussein’s actions towards WMD and terrorism were constant topics in Bush’s speeches. Of the 236 speeches made by Bush

²⁴⁸ Foyle, *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 269.

²⁴⁹ Data for Tables 16 and 17 were compiled based on speeches listed in The White House, Presidential News and Speeches for the months of September 2002-February 2003, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/> (accessed 2 October 2006).

over the course of the six months preceding the Iraq War, 149 or 63% were dominated by Iraq information (see Table 16).

Several interesting observations can be pulled from this data. First, a shift occurred in September 2002. Up to 12 September 2002, Iraq and the WMD issue were not at the forefront of topic conversation. Even in Bush's 11 September "Remarks to the Nation" and "Remarks to the Pentagon," neither Iraq nor Saddam Hussein was mentioned.²⁵⁰

SEPTEMBER TIME FRAME	IRAQ MENTIONS	NO IRAQ MENTIONS
1-12 September 2002	8	11
13-30 September 2002	27	4

Table 17. Dissection of September 2002 Speeches by Bush

Rather, the war in Afghanistan and U.S. Homeland Security/Department of Homeland Security (DHS) were discussed in 16 of 19 speeches during the first 12 days of September. Starting 13 September, a day after Bush addressed the U.N. General Assembly on Iraq, presidential discussion topics switched. Saddam Hussein and the country's continued defiance of U.N. mandates became a constant topic for the administration replacing to a greater degree the war in Afghanistan. Iraq rose in prominence in all of Bush's speeches. Why? On 10 September 2002 with only 27% of the country agreeing that the administration had clearly explained the need for U.S. action in Iraq, Bush needed to press for a program of greater education to win public support for his policy of force.²⁵¹ Foyle similarly concludes the administration decided to "launch the campaign to capture the public's attention around 11 September 2002."²⁵² Recognizing the need to educate the public, the president, while making a speech on 5 September in Kentucky, announced he would "be working closely with our United States

²⁵⁰ The White House, "President's Remarks to the Nation," 11 September 2002, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020911-3.html> (accessed 1 October 2003).

²⁵¹ Global Policy Forum, "Poll: No Rush to War," 24 September 2002, <http://www.globalpolicy.org/security/issues/iraq/attack/2002/0924poll.htm> (accessed 2 October 2002).

²⁵² Foyle, *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 281.

Congress and the American people to explain the threat that Saddam Hussein poses to world peace.”²⁵³ The switch in topics by the Bush administration helped educate the public of its policy decision prior to implementation. The view of Bush as a Pragmatist, who required public acceptance of policy to implement use of force, is thus validated in the Iraq case.

3. Self-constraining Perception by the Executive

Similar to Clinton, Bush was not self-constrained by his own perceptions of the public’s reaction to use of force in Iraq. Unlike his response to 9/11, Bush had time and public opinion data well prior to the United States implementing his policy approach. Time allowed the administration to weigh its options and develop a media campaign to educate the public and turn public opinion in favor of a military option to force Iraq to comply with U.N. mandates. As discussed previously, the transition made by the administration in September 2002 to concentrate on public education of Iraq versus Afghanistan represents a shift in focus and emphasis by the administration. The poll numbers taken at the time (27%) indicated a clear lack of understanding by the American public of the importance the administration placed in force to resolve issues with Iraq. Additionally, public poll data also indicated the desire for an international coalition and support by the U.N. prior to U.S. action. With 52% of the public agreeing that the United States should wait to invade until U.N. teams find proof of WMD,²⁵⁴ 56% voicing that the United States should not invade unless there is a U.N. vote authorizing action, and 57% claiming the United States should not invade unless U.S. European allies have provided support,²⁵⁵ guidelines and limitations for public support were being offered

²⁵³ The White House, “President Focuses on Economy and War on Terrorism in Kentucky Speech,” <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020905-4.html> (accessed 2 October 2006).

²⁵⁴ Gallup Brain, “January Wave 2,” The Gallup Organization, Question 17, 10-12 January 2003, Question 17, <http://institution.gallup.com.libproxy.nps.navy.mil/documents/questionnaire.aspx?STUDY=P0301003> (accessed 2 October 2006).

²⁵⁵ Gallup Brain, “January Wave 4,” The Gallup Organization, Question 15 and 16, 23-25 January 2003, <http://institution.gallup.com.libproxy.nps.navy.mil/documents/questionnaire.aspx?STUDY=P0301005> (accessed 2 October 2006).

months prior to actual invasion and policy implementation. The perceptual need to self constrain created by a crisis situation was negated by the wealth of public information and time available to the executive to digest the formula for gaining public support.

4. Summary of Findings

As retired Gen. Barry McCaffrey said on NBC's *Meet the Press*, "... Armies don't fight wars, countries fight wars. So without the support of the American people, this thing [war in Iraq] will come to a grinding halt rather quickly."²⁵⁶ Similarly, public support is required prior the executive's implementation of force. Bush felt this effect in the months prior to Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. The need to educate a public that did not see the rationale for committing combat arms in Iraq was illustrated by the polls and change of speech topic by the executive starting in September 2002. Reviewing the conclusions and observations gained from the two case studies of Bush, the common conclusion was Bush's Pragmatist belief system when considering the value of public opinion on foreign policy.

Time between start of the Iraq war and additional information into the education process the Bush administration conducted to garner support for the war in 2002 and 2003 affords an additional observation regarding the impact of beliefs and executive decision making. Maintaining Pragmatist beliefs, the executive had determined a preset policy of force in Iraq. To implement this policy, public support was required. As the administration pushed toward public acceptance, the need to tailor the education to specifically cover broad bases of support was identified. Writing about the administration's need to provide universal education of the Iraq policy to cover different facets, Foyle explains:

Although the administration chose to justify its actions by reference to WMD, its motivations really stemmed from a more diffuse and uncertain projection of what an Iraqi WMD program would mean for American security sometime in the future. Since the administration believed that this assessment would not effectively sell the policy to the UN and Congress

²⁵⁶ NBC.com, "Meet the Press," 28 August 2005, <http://securingamerica.com/meetthepress/2005-08-28> (accessed 2 October 2006).

(and the American Public to a lesser extent), it chose instead to describe its policy in terms of Iraq actually possessing WMD. Thus, from a public relations standpoint, the administration faced a conundrum of a convinced public, a persuadable Congress, and a hostile international community; each requiring different arguments and evidence.²⁵⁷

The result of this pursuit of policy and the need to educate the public prior to implementation may have led the administration to “oversell”²⁵⁸ the issues surrounding Iraq to “generate public support and overcome domestic opposition.”²⁵⁹ Initially hinging use of force on WMD, the oversell to generate support is evidenced by post conflict reports generated by Congress, the CIA, British Parliament, Iraq Survey Group,²⁶⁰ as well as Chaim Kaufmann who writes in *International Security*:

By now there is broad agreement among U.S. foreign policy experts, as well as much of the American public and the international community, that the threat assessments that President George W. Bush and his administration used to justify the war against Iraq were greatly exaggerated, and on some dimensions wholly baseless.²⁶¹

Providing independent assessments that counter the administration’s pre-war education, these reports help illuminate potential conflicts of policy as uncertain public opinion collides with executive beliefs about the need to educate the public to garner support for policy implementation.

Additionally, similar to Clinton’s Iraq WMD issue, the Bush situation with Iraq illustrated a previously undisclosed observation. Levels of public constraint and executive self constraint reflect conflict timelines. Conflicts considered as crisis, where action time and public information are limited, minimize the direct constraint by the public and increase the self constraint by the executive and/or their staff. When time

²⁵⁷ Foyle, *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 290.

²⁵⁸ T. Lowi, *The End of Liberalism: The Second Republic of the United States* (New York: Norton, 1979), 2nd ed., quoted in Foyle, *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 290.

²⁵⁹ Foyle, *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 290.

²⁶⁰ For additional information about these agencies WMD assessment and links to their analysis see National Public Radio’s “Iraq WMD Timeline: How the Mystery Unraveled,” 23 November 2005, <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4996218> (accessed 15 November 2006).

²⁶¹ Chaim Kaufmann, “Threat Inflation and the Failure of the Marketplace of Ideas: The Selling of the Iraq War,” *International Security*, Summer 2004, 5.

between decision and action is increased or becomes deliberate, education and understanding by the public is broadened. This increases the potential for direct constraint by the public on the executive's decisions. Any belief structure other than Guardian will be impacted because they value public interaction either during policy formation, policy implementation, or both in the case of the Delegate. Time also provides the executive a recipe to answer the limitations expressed by the public through polls, thus increasing the opportunity for the executive to educate the public and obtain the policy originally intended.

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V. CONCLUSION

A. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Based on the analysis of foreign policy decisions Clinton and Bush made in response to crises they encountered during their tenures as executive, several distinct conclusions are drawn regarding the constraining factors each administration encountered.

- Beliefs of the executive and decision context of the incident are primary inhibitors or catalysts for policy.
- Actual public constraints can be very low, but perceptions of public opinion by the executive or his staff may effectively constrain decisions.
- Constraint may apply more to how force is used rather than whether to use it (i.e., a review of public opinion's constraint on the executive should not center on just whether the public supports use of force, but also which options or tactics it supports).

A review of each of the variables of the Foreign Policy Constraint (F_C) equation ($D_E B_E + D_P B_P = F_C$) will help illustrate the dynamics of each factor and highlight what factors constrained executive decision-making to greater or lesser degrees for each case. At the conclusion of reviewing each variable, the relationship between public opinion and other factors with effects on foreign policy decision-making will be determined. Ultimately, these insights will lead to expectations about the decisions of future policy makers as they relate to use of force during conflict situations.

1. Decision Context of the Executive (D_E)

The decision context of the executive was one of the key constraining variables that stood out for each conflict and effectively constrained both Clinton and Bush. Reviewing foreign policy responses by the administrations to situations within Afghanistan and Iraq revealed a contextual dynamic that was not expected. By showing

how decision context combines with public education going both to and from the executive, a solid constraint on executive decision-making is found.

Despite a sound economy and a population that did not tie Clinton's indiscretions to his job performance, the scandal played a constant role in the mind of the executive. Clinton's significantly diminished interaction with the public through question and answer sessions with the media, lack of national attention to the embassy bombings, constant coverage by the media of the scandal, and continual emphasis by Clinton during speeches of his commitment to do the people's work together show the true effect the scandal had on the executive. Although Clinton stated that his personal problems would not conflict with his professional obligations, this statement is patently false. The evidence points to a decision context engulfed by personal constraint caused by a perception that the public placed more importance on the scandal than it really did. In the end, Clinton's decisions to use cruise missiles in Afghanistan and Sudan in response to the embassy bombings were constrained by the executive's own perception of the public's opinion and need to enact policy that would provide the least amount of potential backlash should it prove unreliable.

In addition to the overall self-perception by Clinton on the limitations the scandal placed on his decision-making, the scandal had a unique by-product which worked to intensify the constraining impact which confronted the administration. As the scandal monopolized the media and poll forums of the country, little direct information was garnered about the public's perception of the embassy bombings or the potential reactions the public expected the country to pursue in this time of crisis. Unlike past attacks on U.S. sovereignty, the embassy bombings were marked by a void of information from the executive to the public and more importantly, as we would see multiplied in the Bush administration and intensified in the Iraq analysis, from the public to the executive. As a Delegate who needed information from the people to create and enact policy, Clinton had no frame of reference from which to judge the public's expectations for action other than the incessant media coverage of his personal issues. In past crises, the time spent from surprise crisis to U.S. action was filled with polls, media reports, and numerous personal sessions with the executive and public. This time allowed not only executive to public

education but also public to executive. As a crisis incident, defined earlier in the introduction by Foyle, Clinton's decision time was already short. With inclusion of a virtual media blackout due to its focus on issues other than the attacks, Clinton's education through public polls and interactions was increasingly diminished. Without the information flow from the public to the executive, Clinton as a Delegate was not afforded the information, expectations, or limitations normally expressed by the public through the media. The crisis decision context led to Clinton's own self perceptions heightened by lack of information and one-sided emphasis by the media. As a result, Clinton needed to enact a policy that would result in minimal downside and backlash from the public.

Although they were not self-constrained by scandal, decision context, and more specifically the crisis nature of 9/11, played an equally important role in constraining foreign policy decisions of the Bush administration. Similar to Clinton, Bush enjoyed high approval ratings. The public's decisional context was less constraining and allowed Bush room to choose his policy direction. For Bush, the constraint, while considering foreign policy options in response to 9/11, would come indirectly through his advisers and their perception of the decision context created by the media. Bush, a president with little practical foreign policy experience prior to 9/11, relied to a greater degree on the advice of his principal NSC staff. While freely espousing a Guardian-like belief in doing the right thing despite public opinion, he equally admitted to relying on the advice of the more experienced staff that he surrounded himself with. As 9/11 unfolded, his principals drew from the crisis context and the strong wishes the public expressed through polls to develop a foreign policy response.

Interestingly, a paradox was created. Normally in crisis situations where there is little time between incident and state response, the public will rally around whichever response the executive decides upon and allow him the room to maneuver. For the public, this was exactly the case during 9/11. The paradox was created as time and technology are thrown into the intervening period between incident and action. Time allows direct education by the public to the executive and his staff. One view of the polls conducted during September 2001 showed a public open to the entire range of U.S. force. Another view showed a decisional context created by the public that could potentially

provide constraint to foreign policy options. Although the public was openly supportive of the president and provided a less constraining environment for him to maneuver, the time between incident and U.S. response allowed for the development of an indirect public constraint through the public education of Bush's advisers. For the 9/11 crisis, polls were conducted and rather than openness of action by the public, public expectations and potential limitations were provided. While the normal non-constraining rally around the executive was not lost on Bush, his advisers were susceptible to the information provided by the media and other sources identifying the popular expectations for U.S. response. A contextual environment was created from which Bush's advisers would take their lead. They concluded the public would not accept a long delay in beginning military action against al Qaeda, and that it also would not support immediate action against Iraq. Indirectly, the actions Bush took, which were provided by his NSC team, were constrained by their perception of public acceptance.

This phenomenon was illuminated further when foreign policy decisions made by both Clinton and Bush in response to Iraq's disregard for U.N. WMD mandates were reviewed. The contextual difference between the embassy bombings and 9/11 and the U.S. response to Iraq is time. The former required policy to be immediate in response to surprise attacks on U.S. interests. An unopposed and possibly uneducated or unjustified rally was created for the president and his policy. The latter saw policy development over a longer period of time where public education as well as executive education transpired. Although different in time and crisis mode, the similarity of decisional context comes in the form of public education of the executive from media, polls, and contact.

Many times the executive attempts to educate the populace towards his policy option. The question needs to be asked: why? The executive is responding to resistance or ignorance expressed by the populace to the policy option. In crisis situations, the need to act outweighs the public's need to learn more before it gives policy support. In a deliberate situation, where anticipation and extended decision time are available, education is used to remove or attempt to modify public resistance to policy. Time is afforded to not only educate the executive and public but also ascertain what expectations

are for action. When public opinion remains unchanged or is adamant about specific requirements for action, the executive modifies policy or adopts the tactic that will satisfy the publicly stated requirement. Education of the executive by the public is done. Because of technology and ready access to data, the executive is more inclined to use poll information and public opinion to judge the rules for playing the game. He may attempt to change those rules by appealing to the public, but when the public is resolved, the decisional context expressed to the executive through public opinion will be followed like a checklist. Despite stated desires to pursue other policy options, both Clinton and Bush followed the desires of the public that were developed through a more constraining decisional context.

2. Beliefs of the Executive (B_E)

The second and most telling constraint on foreign policy is the beliefs of the executive. Foyle's two by two matrix and the analysis done on Clinton and Bush portray them as Delegate and Pragmatist respectively.

		Is public support of a foreign policy necessary?	
		YES	NO
Is it desirable for input from public opinion to affect foreign policy choices?	YES	Delegate Clinton	Executor
	NO	Pragmatist Bush	Guardian

Table 18. Bush and Clinton Public Opinion Belief Structure

Presidents bring their own personal beliefs and leadership styles to the executive. Judging these styles early provides an initial indication on their decision-making and the importance of public opinion. Clinton, who required public opinion both during policy formulation and implementation, was effectively mired down when public input was not provided. The muting of public education of the executive via polls and other media sources stemmed the input Clinton required to make decisions. As a result, Clinton

developed his own perception of the public constraint which affected his policy choice. In the end, rather than enact policy which may have backfired and created public consternation, Clinton chose the safe option of cruise missiles.

Bush, as a Pragmatist, was able to make the initial policy decisions without input from the public. As he moved forward toward policy implementation he made speeches and answered direct policy questions to educate the public to gain acceptance and understanding of the policy choice prior to its enactment. In this way, Bush required public support of foreign policy prior to its implementation.

Each executive had a different belief system and their policy choices were met with varying degrees of success as a result. Reviewing the initial policy results following use of force, Clinton, weighted down by the need for public opinion during the entire policy formulation and enactment cycle, chose force options against Afghanistan and Iraq that proved very ineffectual and lacking in resolve. Taking the safe option for fear of public retribution was not the correct choice. Bush, on the other hand, determined initial policy and moved to gain public support prior to use. While he was indirectly affected by the constraint felt through his advisers, the initial results in Afghanistan and Iraq were positive. Conversely as results and assessments were reviewed in later years of the Iraq war, pitfalls for the Pragmatist were identified. Relating too strongly to an initial course of action not vetted by the public and instituting an education program to move opinion in favor of policy implementation, the Pragmatist may fall prey to overselling a policy that may prove inaccurate. In a deliberate situation, care is required to ensure that the policy created without public input is actually founded on an accurate assessment to ensure when policy is implemented and public is educated (if needed) the honorable intentions of short term success and security do not come at the cost of long term failure.

Public opinion provides checks and balances to executive decision making. While additional cases are needed to analyze the constraints to Executor and Guardian belief structures, a preliminary conclusion made from insights of Delegate and Pragmatist beliefs can be drawn for the overall importance of executive beliefs. Some moderate level of public input is required. The two extremes of Delegate and Guardian can provide a severe negative to policy, because they either overly favor or completely negate public

opinion. For the Delegate, listening to the public exclusively and being afraid and tentative to take action due to public outcry can result in stagnation of efforts, missed opportunities, and, in some cases, an ineffective U.S. policy or use of force. This is shown in Clinton's inability and inaction to take out the terrorists in Afghanistan. His inaction arguably allowed al Qaeda to generate its forces and structure to such a complete system that 9/11 was possible. Rather than break down al Qaeda after its initial assaults on the United States, Clinton did not act due to his concern for public opinion. This allowed al Qaeda to grow and become stronger and more structured.

For the Guardian, totally disregarding the need to listen to public opinion at some point as a test or sounding board, removes the additional opportunity to reflect on policy. Taking actions solely based on one's own beliefs involves risks because those actions are not fully vetted with others. There is no room for error, the person must be right. Public opinion provides a sounding board and provides potential limitations or expectations of action.

The moderate tendency prevalent in the Executor and Pragmatist beliefs provide equal ground for the executive to be forceful and understanding. Public opinion is worked into the decision-making cycle at either beginning or end to ensure that checks are conducted but also to maintain a constant forward movement in policy. Bush, as a Pragmatist, did value public acceptance of policy prior to implementation. While he made decisions initially based on his own beliefs, he acknowledged through action the need to garner public support before the policy was enacted. Although not a focus of this paper, problems can arise for the Executor and Pragmatist if they try to forcefully exert an educational program on the populace for a policy that has been rejected. Over time the aggregate voice of the people provides a good basis for reflection. Pragmatists and Executors who do not recognize this fact, especially in deliberate settings where the public has had ample time to ponder options, and force through their agenda fall short in the long run once an operation continues past the initial rally around the executive at the commencement of operations.

3. Decision Context of the Public (D_P)

Each case showed little constraint provided by the decision context of the public. Unlike the executive who was constrained significantly by the crisis situation, the public was more inclined to release constraint on the executive in these situations. As discussed earlier, the paradox of this came when the expectations of the public were polled and expressed. Rather than open the policy possibilities available to the executive, they provided limitations and expectations of action. The overall effect, while less constraining to the public, was more constraining to the executive.

4. Beliefs of the Public (B_P)

Similar to the decision context, the beliefs of the public were less constraining on the executive. Each action was shown to be in the vital interest of the nation. As a top of the staircase situation, public constraint and acceptance for use of force was maximized. Theoretically, this provided the executive the room to maneuver and plan policy based on his desires. In most cases the lack of public input or constraint led to the executive adopting a self perception of constraint either through his own beliefs or those of his principals.

5. Overall Foreign Policy Constraint (F_C) Impactors

Beliefs of the executive are the greatest constraining impactor on foreign policy. Thoughts on the importance public opinion should play in developing and implementing policy provide the first telltale signs of potential constraint. Whether too much focus on the public as Clinton, the Delegate, showed or moderately correct as Bush and his initial actions illustrated, the emphasis the executive places on public input will illuminate future decision criteria and context.

Decision context of the executive provides additional constraint on foreign policy decision-making. Crisis situations, where direct public input is lacking creates a situation where the executive or his principal advisers self constrain based on perceived notions of public acceptance. A non-crisis context, where time is afforded to provide information

on public acceptance and expectations, ensures education of the executive to the limitations and knowledge of the public. Depending on the presidential belief structure, education by the public through polls and media exchanges will help sway the decisions and final policy solutions the executive enacts.

The public, rather than being a direct and voiced constraint, becomes an intervening variable in the equation affecting the decision context just as situation and environment type.

B. POLICY IMPLICATIONS OF PUBLIC OPINION

Several policy implications are evident. During times of crisis, it is important to weigh and judge the opinions of the public to provide the initial education for the executive. While the public may not perceive this as overly constraining and in fact may open up the option box for the executive, it does, depending on the belief structure and emphasis placed on advisers, indirectly provide limitations and expectations of action for the executive. This creates a complex decision context for the executive which will effectively constrain his decision-making.

There is a nefarious potential in this observation. Polls can be used and conducted to show skewed interest in one form of action over another. The possibility of biased poll reporting on the part of media to push one form of policy over another is possible and for executives relying on that education (Delegate, Executor, and Pragmatist) the potential to sway decision-making away from more valid policy options due to public numbers is foreseeable. There is also the opposite possibility – the ability for the executive to use poll questions and data to sway public opinion to his policy option.

Equally, in situations where media and public information is lacking due to a predominance of reporting of other issues (scandal), the opportunity for faulty policy for executives whose beliefs fall into the Delegate and Executor area is high. Without public input, initial policy decisions made by these two will be based on their own possibly skewed perception of public acceptance or constraint. Recognizing what the executive

needs to make decisions is vital to ensuring sound policy or at the very least ensuring the executive has the information he needs to make and implement policy.

C. FINAL THOUGHTS ON PUBLIC OPINION

Public opinion, as it was researched in this thesis, takes on a double life within the decision-making realm of the executive. It serves as a deterrent on the executive when public opinion is accepting and the direct constraining impact is limited or it is acutely constraining evidenced by negative poll numbers and overt public opinion voiced through media or other outlets.

The former generally takes place when the decisional context of the country is sound and the incident is a crisis requiring immediate attention and action. As a result, there is no two-way communication of expectations by the executive or the public. In this deterrent situation, the idea of public opinion will deter the actions of the executive. The executive and/or his principals will self-constrain their actions based on the perceived expectations or limiting factors the public is assumed to advocate.

The latter situation is more direct and public opinion is considered more constraining. Rather than subtly deterring and impacting policy decisions, the public conveys more clearly and loudly its expectations and ideas of acceptable policy. In these situations, the decisional context reflects poor domestic conditions or the incident is deliberate where the public and executive have ample time to review the situation and its implications. The incident generally unfolds over time resulting in a longer decision and planning cycle where executive and public education have time to shape opinions.

Equally important are the beliefs about public opinion's importance to decision-making each executive brings to the job. Where the executive is totally immersed in doing the people's work as a Delegate, the need for public opinion for policy input and implementation is high. This can lead to stagnation and stunted policy decisions when opinion is negative or absent. The absence of public opinion during the initial stages leads to limited education of the executive of the public's desires and expectations. Although the dynamics of public opinion and its effects on executive decision-making are complex and vary depending on the decisional context and beliefs of the executive, an

analysis of each of these areas in combination with the public's beliefs and decisional context will provide greater understanding and predictability when policy decisions are made.

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APPENDIX – PRESIDENT CLINTON’S COMMENTS

Volume	Date	President’s Verbiage	Context of Verbiage	Media Question Heading	Event Title
Volume 1	21-Jan-98	“But meanwhile, I’ve got to go on with the work of the country. I got hired to help the rest of the American people.”	Personal Turmoil	Independent Counsel’s Investigation	Page 89 - Interview with Jim Lehrer of the PBS “News Hour”
Volume 1	21-Jan-98	“But I can tell you, whatever I feel about it, I owe it to all the American people to put it in a little box and keep working for them.”	Personal Turmoil	Independent Counsel’s Investigation	Page 98 - Interview with Jim Lehrer of the PBS “News Hour”
Volume 1	5-Feb-98	“I think it’s important to go back and do the work for the American people that I was hired to do.”	Personal Turmoil	Independent Counsel’s Investigation	Page 175 - Remarks Prior to Discussions with Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom and an Exchange with Reporters
Volume 1	5-Feb-98	“But there is an ongoing investigation. Under those circumstances, the right thing to do is to go back and do the job the American people hired me to do, and that’s what I am doing”	Personal Turmoil	Independent Counsel’s Investigation	Page 178 - Remarks Prior to Discussions with Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom and an Exchange with Reporters
Volume 1	6-Feb-98	It’s better to let the investigation go on, and have me do my job and focus on my public responsibilities ... That’s what I think I should do, and that’s what I intend to do.”	Personal Turmoil	Independent Counsel’s Investigation	Page 187 - The President’s News Conference with Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom
Volume 1	6-Feb-98	“You know, I was elected to do a job. I think the American people know two or three things about me ... I think they know that I care very much about them, that I care about ordinary people whose voices aren’t often heard here. And I think they know I have worked very, very hard for them.”	Personal Turmoil	Possibility of Resignation	Page 187 - The President’s News Conference with Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom

Volume	Date	President's Verbiage	Context of Verbiage	Media Question Heading	Event Title
Volume 1	19-Feb-98	"Well, if further action becomes necessary, I will obviously speak directly to the American people about it."	Education of Public	Situation in Iraq	Page 245 - Remarks on the Situation in Iraq and an Exchange with Reporters
Volume 1	11-Mar-98	"Well, you know I'm not going to talk about that today. I can't. I've got to do the work that the people of this country hired me to do, so I can't—I'm not going to discuss that."	Personal Turmoil	Independent Counsel's Investigation	Page 355 - Remarks Prior to Discussions with United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan and an Exchange with Reporters
Volume 1	24-Mar-98	"I'm glad to be doing the business of the United States and the people ... I think most Americans want me to do the job I was elected to do. And so I'm going to try and do what most people want me to do."	Personal Turmoil	President's Visit to Africa	Page 425 - Exchange with Reporters Prior to Discussions with President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni of Uganda in Kampala, Uganda
Volume 1	2-Apr-98	"... but the most important thing is that I can go back now and continue the work I'm doing. That's the most important thing to me. I want to get back to the business of the people."	Personal Turmoil	Dismissal of Paula Jones Civil Lawsuit	Page 489 - Exchange with Reporters in Dakar
Volume 1	2-Apr-98	"... and that's what I intend to continue to do ... I need to keep working on the people's business, and that's what I intend to do."	Personal Turmoil	Independent Counsel's Investigation	Page 489 - Exchange with Reporters in Dakar
Volume 1	3-Apr-98	"Our economy is the strongest on a generation; our social fabric is on the mend ... the American people want us to use this sunlit moment not to sit back and enjoy but to act. We were hired by the American people to act."	Beliefs	Legislative Agenda	Page 498 - Remarks on the Legislative Agenda and an Exchange with Reporters

Volume	Date	President's Verbiage	Context of Verbiage	Media Question Heading	Event Title
Volume 1	28-Apr-98	"I've told you, Mr Gingrich said alot of things last night that I don't think deserve a response, and I think it would not serve the American public well for me to waste my time doing it. I think I need to be focused on the public issues that affect them, and that's what I intend to do."	Personal Turmoil	Criticism from Speaker of the House	Page 633 - Remarks on Receiving the Report of the Social Security and Medicare Trustees and an Exchange with Reporters
Volume 1	28-Apr-98	"So we have to-we really need to continue this effort we're making this calendar year to educate the public and to get the ideas out there ... and then I think what you'll see-is very a rapid action early next year."	Education of Public	Legislative Agenda and Social Security	Page 634 - Remarks on Receiving the Report of the Social Security and Medicare Trustees and an Exchange with Reporters
Volume 1	30-Apr-98	"... Justice Scalia was right when he said that nothing that could be done to me in a legal way would in any way affect my job as President ... and I'm going to do my best to prove him correct by doing the public's business."	Personal Turmoil	Presidential Standards	Page 643 - The President's News Conference
Volume 1	30-Apr-98	"If they - if the American people will send them a clear signal and they conclude it's in their interest to work with me ... all of us working together to do it, then I think that's what will happen."	Public's Power	Congress and Legislative Agenda	Page 648 - The President's News Conference
Volume 1	4-May-98	"I've done my best to demonstrate to the American people that I'm letting all this business from Mr. Starr be handled by my lawyers and others speaking on my behalf ... but that I am working on their business."	Personal Turmoil	Independent Counsel's Investigation	Page 687 - Interview with Al Hunt for CNBC and the Wall Street Journal
Volume 1	17-Jun-98	"They nearly always -the public almost always gets it right when they have enough time, and they've got plenty of time."	Public's Decision Ability	Tobacco Issues	Page 979 - Remarks on Senate Action on Tobacco Legislation and an Exchange with Reporters

Volume	Date	President's Verbiage	Context of Verbiage	Media Question Heading	Event Title
Volume 2	2-Sep-98	"No, I've been quite heartened by the reaction of the American people ... and I said I was going to get back to work. I believe that's what the American people want me to do ... and that is what I intend to do."	Personal Turmoil	President's Effectiveness	Page 1499 - The President's News Conference with President Boris Yeltsin of Russia in Moscow
Volume 2	4-Sep-98	Philosophy of why we needed to strike	Personal Thoughts	US Strike Response	Page 1530 - Exchange with Reporters Prior to Discussions with Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland in Dublin
Volume 2	16-Sep-98	"Let me first of all say that the personal toll on me is of no concern ... I'm working on what I should be working on. I believe the right thing for the country- and what I believe the people of the country want is, now that they know what happened, they want to put it behind them, and they want to go on. And they want me to go on and do my job, and that's what I intend to do."	Personal Turmoil	Testimony Before Grand Jury	Page 1594 - The President's News Conference with President Vaclav Havel of the Czech Republic
Volume 2	22-Sep-98	"I think it's important that I focus on what I'm doing for the American people, and that's what I intend to do."	Personal Turmoil	Independent Counsel's Referral	Page 1641 - Remarks During Discussions with Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi of Japan and an Exchange with Reporters in New York City
Volume 2	7-Oct-98	"What happens to me I think ultimately will be for the American people to decide. I owe them my best efforts to work for them, and that's what I am going to do."	Personal Turmoil	Impeachment Inquiry Vote	Page 1748 - Remarks Prior to Discussions with Prime Minister Viktor Orban of Hungary and an Exchange with Reporters
Volume 2	7-Oct-98	"But I want them [congress]- more important than anything else to me is that they do the people's work and then let- the people will decide where we go from here."	Personal Turmoil	Impeachment Inquiry Vote	Page 1749 - Remarks Prior to Discussions with Prime Minister Viktor Orban of Hungary and an Exchange with Reporters

Volume	Date	President's Verbiage	Context of Verbiage	Media Question Heading	Event Title
Volume 2	8-Oct-98	"Those are my priorities. I think those are the priorities of the American people."	Personal Turmoil	Impeachment Inquiry Vote	Page 1767 - Remarks on the Impeachment Inquiry Vote and Exchange with Reporters
Volume 2	11-Oct-98	"They [congress] shouldn't be worried about whether the President is here or not ... I'm worried about what they do when they are here. They kill everything that the American people want. And that's what they've got to get to work on, to do the things people want done."	Public's Role	Continuing Resolution Legislation	Page 1779 - Remarks During Education Budget Negotiations and an Exchange with Reporters
Volume 2	2-Nov-98	"Well, that depends upon who votes and what the message is. And I hope that the American people will turn out, and I hope that the electorate tomorrow will reflect what we know the electorate as a whole feels. The American people as a whole want us to put this partisanship behind us, want us to get back to their business ... So I agree with that, and I think they can do alot tomorrow to reduce partisanship."	Public's Influence	1998 Elections	Page 1967 - Interview with Tavis Smiley of Black Entertainment Television
Volume 2	2-Nov-98	"The American people, given enough time, virtually always make the right decision."	Public's Decision Ability	1998 Elections	Page 1956 - Telephone Interview with Tom Joyner, Sybil Wilkes, and Myra J. of the Tom Joyner Morning Show
Volume 2	5-Nov-98	"I think the important thing is that we've got to go back to doing the people's business. The American people sent us a message that would break the eardrums of anyone who was listening. They want their business tended to. They want the people and their issues and their future taken care of and that's what we're here to do."	Personal Turmoil	Impeachment Inquiry	Page 1979 - Remarks on the Legislative Agenda and an Exchange with Reporters

Volume	Date	President's Verbiage	Context of Verbiage	Media Question Heading	Event Title
Volume 2	2-Dec-98	"It's important to me to get on with the work of the country, and that's what I am doing here, and that's what I intend to continue to do."	Personal Turmoil	Impeachment Inquiry	Page 2111 - Remarks Prior to Discussions with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan and an Exchange with Reporters

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